■ Entertainment / C1

Pinay 3rd in World Coffee Queen Search

■ World / A8

Flu in pigs looms as new pandemic-WHO

■ Lifestyle / D1

Hip-hop, hooray for Hollywood

■ Business / B1

Gasoline, diesel prices rise by 35 centavos/liter

Tanong ng Bayan / A18

Still no Olympic gold: Saan tayo nagkulang?

WIN A 21" TV! TEXT 2910

GMA retains team of economic managers

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

IN THE midst of the fiscal crisis, President Macapagal-Arroyo is retaining her team of economic managers. Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez, however, is reportedly on the way out.

In a statement, Press Secretary Ignacio

GMA RETAINS/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'Gender balance' needed in Cabinet, says lawmaker

By Cynthia D. Balana

'WAG MO NAMAN ISNABIN ANG MGA KA-BARO MO!

NOT ALL girls just wanna have fun.

Women in politics naturally want big chunks of the action in running the country. This is why Presi-

GENDER/ A18

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

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RP already in midst of fiscal crisis–GMA

But 3 economic managers dispute her assessment

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Christian V. Esguerra and Michelle V. Remo

FOR THE first time, President Macapagal-Arroyo acknowledged yesterday that the country was in a fiscal crisis, a move meant to rally the public behind her tax reform and cost-cutting measures to avert an Argentina-like financial meltdown in the next two to three years.

"We are already in the midst of a fiscal crisis and we have to face it squarely—wielding our courage, resourcefulness and solidarity as a nation and people," the President said in a speech at Camp Crame in Quezon City.

Ms Arroyo's candid admission of the government's increasing difficulty to finance its expenditures and service its debts came after the INQUIRER reported on Monday on the warning of 11 faculty members of the University of the Philippines School of Economics that the country was facing an economic crash in two to three years in the scale of the Argentine collapse unless the government reined in the public sector deficit and its debt.

"I appreciate the concern and suggestions being put forth by well-meaning quarters to resolve the crisis. I take this as a sign of concern that must be translated into deeper public awareness and action," Ms Arroyo said.

But three of her economic managers disagreed with her. (Last week, Ms Arroyo said only those who agreed with her views could join her Cabinet.)

Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar V. Purisima said the country was not in a "fiscal crisis."

Purisima said in a text message that Ms Arroyo used the term "rhetorically and not technically."

"Proof of this is the venue and

RP ALREADY/ A6

IN THE KNOW

What is a fiscal crisis?

A condition in which gov't can no longer manage its debts due to a huge budget deficit, an imbalance between revenues and expenditures.

A widening budget deficit means that the bulk of gov't revenues, mainly from taxes, is used to pay debts, instead of going to basic services and infrastructure, which are important for economic growth.

When the deficit grows while expenditures for basic services and infrastructure shrink, the confidence of creditors in gov't goes down, and their interest rates go up.

Last year, nearly half of gov't revenue from taxes went to interest payments.

What happens during a fiscal crisis?

- Political instability
- Drop in average incomes
- High inflation
- High unemployment
- Currency depreciation

By PDI Research

Sources: PDI archives, interviews with Professors Benjamin Diokno and Ernesto Pernia of the UP School of Economics

AT A GLANCE

Foreign debt *(as of Feb. 2004)*	: P 2.35 trillion
Domestic debt *(as of Feb. 2004)*	: P 2.48 trillion
Debt service *(as of June 2004)*	: P 270 billion
Tax collection *(Jan-June 2004)*	: P343.3 billion
Tax effort *(2003, % of GDP)*	: 12.5%
Budget deficit *(Jan.-June 2004)*	: P 80.1 billion

HANDOVER RITES: President Arroyo witnesses the ceremonial turnover of command in the Philippine National Police from outgoing Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. (left) to incoming Director General Edgardo Aglipay.

VAL HANDUMON

Aglipay term extended 6 months

By Christian V. Esguerra and Juliet Labog-Javellana

HE CALLS it "Operation Taba" and if you breach its rigid rules, you will be banished to Corregidor or to some distant corner of the country for rehabilitation.

Assuming command of the Philippine National Police, Director Edgar Aglipay yesterday spelled out Taba—for Tamad, Abusado, Bastos, Ayaw madisiplina—as a campaign that would throw lazy, abusive, rude and incorrigible policemen into police reformatory schools, such as the one on Corregidor.

Impressed with Aglipay's past performance, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced at the formal turnover of the police command at Camp Crame that she

AGLIPAY/ A18

Governors oppose bid to suspend IRA release

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau
Carlito Pablo
and Michael Lim Ubac

THE LEAGUE of Provinces of the Philippines (LPP) and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines (Ulap) are against Malacañang's move to suspend the release of the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) for 18 months to help ease the government's budget deficit.

The LPP adopted a resolution addressed to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the Senate and House of Representatives, expressing opposition to the proposal of Albay Rep. Joey Salceda.

The resolution was passed during the national executive board meeting on Saturday at the Waterfront Hotel in Cebu City, which was called by Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, LPP chair and interim Ulap president.

Aumentado said Ulap also passed a similar resolution, which would be presented to Ms Arroyo along with the LPP resolution at the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) meeting today. Aumentado is a member of Ledac.

The governor said the local government units (LGUs) were opposed to the proposal to suspend the IRA release because it

GOVERNORS/ A6

POWER PLAY. "Warriors," numbering 10 in each opposing team, participate in a tug-of-war called "guyyudan" during an agricultural thanksgiving festival in Ifugao.

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STUDY

Indigenous world games planned

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Exactly how much interest would corporate advertisers have in an Olympic-style sports meet where 70-year-old men in G-strings would fling darts or full-costumed warriors would hurl spears to score points?

Hopefully as much as they had shown for the Olympics for most of the past century, now that proposals to launch world games for indigenous peoples may eventually get off the ground.

Scholars worldwide are turning to ancient sports for insights into how indigenous peoples resolve conflicts, said Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, executive director of Tebtebba Foundation, a United Nations lobby group.

For example, Corpuz said, the experts were probing wrestling matches among American Indians, as well as the Filipino Ifugaos' unique land dispute trial called "*uggub*," as alternative ways of conflict management.

She gave an example to illustrate the urgency of her advocacy. She revealed that corporate mining and technological development groups had been promising economic assistance to tribes around the world to gain access to ancestral lands. Without a clear understanding of their ancient justice systems, the tribes' only response so far had been to capitulate

INDIGENOUS/ A18

Engineer shot in Iraq out of danger

By TJ Burgonio

LIKE ANGELO de la Cruz, he couldn't help but flirt with fate. And like the Pampanga truck driver, he came through—but with bullet wounds.

Department of Foreign Affairs officials yesterday said that Filipino telecommunications engineer Danilo Pasia was out of danger but would undergo surgery for bullet wounds he received when he and his foreign companions were ambushed in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul on Sunday.

A fellow Indonesian engineer and two Iraqis, apparently security escorts, traveling in the group were killed.

A team from the Philippine Embassy in Baghdad will visit Pasia at the Al-Jumuhiri Hospital in Mosul "to ascertain his condition" and give assistance, DFA officials said.

The 50-year-old Pasia is from Mandaluyong City.

His wife Joyce told DFA officials that her husband called after the attack and left a message that he was "out of harm's way."

DFA officials had yet to establish how Pasia, who left Manila in March, managed to enter the war-torn state, and how long he had been there.

"We were not aware of the mode of his transportation going to Iraq, but it is suspected

ENGINEER/ A4

KARAM HUSSEIN/EPA

WOUNDED Filipino engineer Danilo Pasia recovers under heavy guard at the Al-Jumuhiri Hospital in Mosul, Iraq.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/08/24/04

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

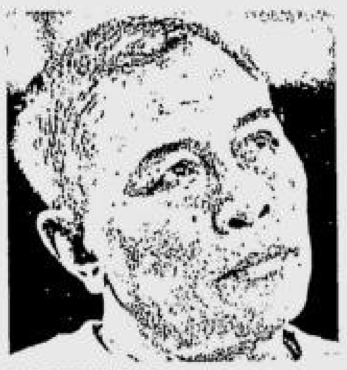
Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Martinez snubs Wakamiya

By Fe Zamora

THE SOLDIERS convicted of killing Benigno Aquino Jr. yesterday snubbed a meeting with a Japanese journalist whose testimony helped send them to prison.

The soldiers, led by M/Sgt. Pablo Martinez, called off the meeting with Kiyoshi Wakamiya, a close friend of Aquino's who had been on the plane that brought the opposition leader home from exile.



MARTINEZ: No trust

Wakamiya had testified before the Agrava Commission which investigated the killing that it could only have been one of the soldiers who had escorted Aquino off the China Airlines plane on Aug. 21, 1983, who had shot him.

"The soldiers don't want to see him because they believe he (Wakamiya) is one of the reasons they are in jail," said prison chaplain Fr. Roberto Olaguer, relaying a message from Martinez.

Martinez and the other soldiers, according to Olaguer, also distrusted Wakamiya because "he made that video that showed the soldiers as the killers of Ninoy."

Martinez, 67, recently executed an affidavit saying that Aquino was shot by Rolando Galman, whom then President Ferdinand Marcos claimed had been hired by the communists to kill the former senator.

Accompanied by Public Attorneys Office chief Persida Rueda-Acosta, Wakamiya and a crew from the Japanese TBS television network motored to the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa City to meet with the soldiers and show them the actual footage taken by TBS at the Manila International Airport on that fateful day.

But the soldiers declined to meet with Wakamiya. Acosta also called off the meeting after TBS had sought her permission to use a hidden camera to record the convicts' reaction to the video.

TBS reporter Yuka Shoji had wanted to secretly record the soldiers as they watched the video. "I wanted them to be at ease," Shoji told the INQUIRER.

Informed of the plan, Acosta put her foot down. "We may be violating their [soldiers'] rights. They also have rights even if they are convicts," she said.

The TBS withdrew its secret camera but it was too late. "I felt betrayed," Acosta complained.

Acosta, who has taken up the convicts' cause to have the Aquino-Galman murder case reopened, said more potential witnesses have surfaced.

KIYOSHI Wakamiya points to photographs of soldiers and Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. he took on Aug. 21, 1983. Beside him is Public Attorneys Office chief Persida Rueda-Acosta who accompanied him to the New Bilibid Prisons in Muntinlupa. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

"You see, I dared anyone who had information about the case to come out and tell all, and the response has been overwhelming."

She doubted, however, that Wakamiya would be called as a witness in a new trial.

"If you had seen the actual killing, *wala sana tayong problema ngayon*(we wouldn't have a problem today)," Acosta told Wakamiya at the NBP.

Wakamiya had seen everything but the hand that held the gun used to shoot Aquino. The TBS video was analyzed by experts and used as evidence in the trial that convicted the 15 soldiers, Martinez among them.

Wakamiya told the INQUIRER that he wanted to know who the "triggerman" was. He said the question of unmasking the mastermind belonged to "another category."

"The claim that Galman was the killer is all nonsense. There is scientific evidence supported by eyewitnesses that Senator Aquino was shot while on the stairway by one of the soldier-escorts," Wakamiya said. He said he was open to any new testimony, however.

Acosta said witnesses had come out who would support Martinez's allegation that it was Galman who shot Aquino on orders of a close relative of President Corazon Aquino, the senator's widow.

Martinez said he knew this because he himself had picked up Galman in San Miguel, Bulacan, on Aug. 20, the day before the killing.

Acosta said Martinez's allegation reinforced the finding of the Agrava Commission that a military conspiracy was behind the Aquino-Galman double murder.

"Now what I want to know is who were the conspirators," Acosta said.

Miriam rails at FVR over Smokey controversy

By Christine O. Avendaño

SEN. MIRIAM Defensor-Santiago did not hide her anger at former President Fidel V. Ramos in her third privilege speech on the Smokey Mountain controversy at the Senate yesterday.

An emotional Santiago took the floor to denounce Ramos for "attacking" her when he said that she used to be a member of the Public Estates Authority which recommended the use of reclaimed land for government development projects like the Smokey Mountain project.

At one point in her speech, she turned personal and said that she too could engage in black propaganda like Ramos. She said she could talk about his private life and his women, for instance.

Ramos said over the weekend that Santiago had served as a PEA director from 1991 to 1998 and had approved the reclamation of thousands of hectares in Manila Bay "where parts of the reclaimed land were conveyed to developers as payment."

Santiago said Ramos' statement was an "attempt to create an incorrect impression."

"It is like comparing the character of a vestal virgin to the character of a serial rapist," the senator said.

"There is a world of difference, because previous PEA contracts, unlike the Smokey Mountain contract, did not involve the release of billions of pesos in public funds to the developer," she said.

Speaking in Filipino, Santiago said she could not see the connection between her having served on the PEA board and the Smokey Mountain scandal she had linked Ramos to.

"*Pinepwersa niya akong idamay*," she said. "*Kung yan ang gusto niya, ayaw niya pala idaan sa batas ito kundi idaan sa* black propaganda *sabihin lang niya at pag-usapan natin ang buhay privado niya, lalong lalo na ang mga babae sa buhay niya* (If he persists in using black propaganda against me, we could talk about his private life, particularly his women)."

Pimentel decides to remain as minority leader

By Christine O. Avendaño

AFTER everything has been said and done, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is still the leader of the minority bloc.

Emerging from the minority caucus yesterday, Pimentel said he had acceded to the request of his colleagues to remain as minority leader.

"The issue has been resolved. I stay on as minority leader and that's it," Pimentel told reporters.

He refused to explain what transpired or what spurred all this, only saying: "We threshed it out as mature people."

There was no need to revive the issue, he told reporters.

The minority held a caucus yesterday after Pimentel told them last week that he was quitting as minority leader "effective immediately."

Taking advantage of the squabble within the opposition, the administration bloc tried to lure Pimentel to join its ranks.

The offer came from no less than Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan who asked Pimentel to "align himself with us."

"I think Nene's stance and ideological inclinations make him more akin to like-minded mavericks in the majority. He is welcome to align himself with us if he so wishes," said Pangilinan.

Pimentel even sent text messages to opposition Senators Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson confirming that he was quitting as minority leader "effective immediately."

Pimentel decided to step down as minority leader after he alone supported with the majority, an amendment to the legislative calendar for this year. He joined 12 majority senators in approving the new calendar while seven of his colleagues in the minority voted against it.

The issue on whether to extend the chamber's vacation from two to four weeks threw the chamber into a heated and exasperating debate on the floor Wednesday.

Pimentel supported the majority since it was a slight modification of his proposed calendar, which more or less, has eight months of straight work and a one-month break every two months.

Under the approved calendar, which is attuned to the schedule of the Lower House, the chamber will take a break on Sept. 25, then resume session on Oct. 29.

The chamber will again adjourn on Oct. 30 until Nov. 7, and resume session on Nov. 8 to Dec. 17. It will have a Christmas break from Dec. 18 to Jan. 9, 2005 and resume on Jan. 10 up to March 18. It will have a month-long vacation again from March 19 to April 10 before resuming sessions on April 11 up to June 10.

Angara said the minority caucus saw members clearing up the issue.

"We all support Nene," he stressed.

He later told reporters that it was simply a case of miscommunication.

Angara explained that Pimentel had distributed to the minority during two past meetings his proposal for a new congressional calendar. His proposal was for congressional sessions to run for two months more and just break for one month.

Pimentel found the proposal submitted by Pangilinan to be acceptable because it was not that different from his own. *With Michael Lim Ubac*

Angelo: Thank you very much for saving my life

By TJ Burgonio

A MORE relaxed Angelo de la Cruz yesterday called on Foreign Affairs Secretary Delia Albert to thank her for her efforts which saved him from a beheading in Iraq last month.

The call by the truck driver could not have come at a better time. Albert is handing over the reins of the Department of Foreign Affairs today to Alberto Romulo, the erstwhile executive secretary who was moved to the DFA by President Macapagal-Arroyo in last week's Cabinet revamp.

Albert would remain at the DFA, however, until a new post is found for her. She is reportedly eyeing the United Nations job currently held by Ambassador Lauro Baja Jr.

"To God, our President, Secretary Albert, thank you very much," said the soft-spoken De la Cruz in a brief statement in the DFA lobby.

"I can imagine the difficulty you went through just to help me," he said, likewise thanking Ambassador Roy Cimatu and DFA Undersecretary for Special Concerns Rafael Seguis who also worked for his release.

Minutes earlier, Albert handed a smiling De la Cruz his last pay check from the Middle East for three months of work amounting to P33,000, as well as a compilation of the news articles about him and the hostage crisis he went through.

Turning serious, De la Cruz denied reports that he had received a windfall of benefits, including a house and lot, from the government since his release in July.

"I would like to explain to you, as you can see from this paycheck, this is the pay I got from my former employer. This is to dispel any reports that might come out that Angelo de la Cruz has become a moneyed man," he said.

"I repeat, I'm not rich. I'm not expecting to receive money from the President or the government. It's enough that they saved my life," he added.

TRUCK driver Angelo de la Cruz shows off his last salary handed to him by outgoing Foreign Affairs Secretary Delia Albert, at right, at the Foreign Office Monday. Also at the presentation were Undersecretaries Rafael Seguis and Jose Brillantes. JOAN BONDOC

GMA, FVR, Erap liable for Smokey mess, says lawyer

By TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and her predecessors Fidel V. Ramos and Joseph Estrada may be held liable under the law for implementing the Smokey Mountain project which used government funds for a private endeavor.

Former Solicitor General Frank Chavez made the statement yesterday as he accused the government of continuing to back the project even after its contract with the developer, R-II Builders of Reghis Romero, had been terminated in 2003.

Chavez said that while he had not seen any documents to link Ms Arroyo or her predecessors to the project, the three could be held liable for pressing ahead with the project despite its legal flaws under the principle of command responsibility.

"This was started by Ramos, continued by Erap [Estrada] and by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in gross violation of the Constitution," Chavez said after a press forum at the Manila Hotel.

"There's no document [bearing their signatures], but on the basis of command responsibility, who else has [control of] the bureaucracy but the President?"

The Constitution bars private entities from owning reclaimed land, which falls under the public domain.

Chavez, who petitioned the Supreme Court to nullify the contract, said government institutions would not have poured money into the project without the "prodding or insistence of the President."

"Migrante International should study the possibility of filing charges of plunder, estafa and gross violation of the Graft and Corrupt Practices Act [against those responsible]," Chavez said at the forum.

He said some P835 million in Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) funds was used to finance the project.

Named respondents in Chavez's petition were the National Housing Authority, Reghis Romero, R-II Builders, R-II Holdings and Harbor Center, the latter three being companies controlled by Romero.

It was the NHA which entered into a joint venture with R-II Builders to develop the Smokey Mountain dump into housing for the poor in 1993 during Ramos' term.

Chavez said the contract should be voided because the NHA was not authorized to engage in a reclamation project, which the Smokey Mountain development basically was because it involved land reclaimed from Manila Bay.

Other reasons cited by Chavez for nullifying the project were: the Department of Environment and Natural Resources did not issue a permit for the project, the Public Estates Authority did not approve it, and lands in the public domain cannot be acquired by private firms.

Chavez said the government continued to implement the project after 2003.

Medical board topnotcher to practice in RP

KAREN Lucero Nielsen, who topped the most recent medical board exams, is anything but a nerd.

She not only looks gorgeous, she has a life outside medical school.

When this graduate of the University of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center found out she had topped the exams, she laughed. "I never thought it would happen."

Karen scored 84.42 in the 2004 Physician Licensure Examination where only 1,183 passed out of 2,301 examinees.

She has no secret formula for excellence. "Just read and understand," said this half-Filipino, half-Danish beauty who opted for self-study over review sessions.

LUCERO-NIELSEN: Filipino-Danish beauty finds it sad that new doctors have to leave country.

Unlike other medical graduates who dream of going abroad for better-paying jobs, Karen stands firm in her decision to stay and practice medicine in the Philippines.

"I think it's very sad that new doctors have to practice elsewhere," she said.

She plans to specialize in either surgery or internal medicine, choosing to train in her alma mater's hospital.

"She is a brilliant student who raises the level of class discussions," UERMMMC College of Medicine Dean Georgina Paredes said. "She is a welcome addition to the hospital's pool of outstanding medical professionals."

Karen, a cum laude graduate, belongs to a family of engineers and economists. "I have always wanted to become a doctor since I was a kid," she said.

She took her time and a roundabout way of getting there.

Karen was a consistent honor student, starting in grade school at the Maria Montessori Cooperative School, then high school at Assumption College, followed by a two-year International Baccalaureate in Denmark, then Economics in Development at the University of Sussex in England and, finally, medical school at UERMMMC.

"I chose this school because of its problem-based learning. The seminar-based method allows for independent study," she said.

Acknowledged as one of the Philippines' top five medical schools, UERMMMC has received five Exemplary Passing Performance awards from the Professional Regulation Commission.

Some of its renowned alumni include medical director of St. Luke's Medical Center and neurologist Joven Cuanang, UERMMMC president and top cardiologist Romeo Divinagracia, and liver specialist Erlinda Valdellon, former UERMMMC dean.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Giant US bank asked to pay 'fair rental' for UP's Forbes Park lot

By Carlito Pablo

THE GRANDSON-LAWMAKER and namesake of the late nationalist Senator Lorenzo Tañada yesterday took on global finance giant Citibank for refusing to pay "fair rental" on a prime property owned by the University of the Philippines.

In his first privilege speech, neophyte Rep. Lorenzo Tañada III (LP, Quezon) accused Citibank of having "employed its corporate might and its vast legal resources to try and get away with highway robbery at the expense of our foremost public university."

"While our premiere university—like much of the rest of the nation—stands beset by economic hardship and uncertainty, the world's richest bank refuses to pay fair rental value on prime property it has enjoyed for a quarter century," Tañada said.

He was referring to the 4,500-square-meter UP property at No. 38 McKinley Drive in Forbes Park, Makati, one of the country's most exclusive addresses and currently the residence of Citibank country chief James Hunt.

Tañada said Citibank first owned the property by virtue of the Laurel-Langley Agreement which allowed US nationals and companies to own lands in the Philippines.

When the accord expired in 1974, Citibank donated the property to UP but continued using it under a long-term lease.

"But that value redounded to the benefit of Citibank, which secured a 25-year lease from UP in 1976 allowing it to pay only about P1,000 a month for 25 years," Tañada said.

UP agreed on the bargain lease price "in anticipation of the time when it could make full use of this resource, which today it sorely needs in the face of declining state subsidies for higher education and spiraling costs."

The Citibank lease expired on Dec. 28, 2001 and that's when the problem over the re-negotiation of the lease began.

Appraisers placed the "fair rental value" of the property at P300,000 a month.

"But instead of recognizing this figure, Citibank offered UP a check of P16,378.33 as rental for 2002 which UP refused to accept," Tañada said.

UP insisted on a "fair rental and on an escalation clause to account for fluctuations in the peso-dollar rate."

TAÑADA III: World's richest bank paid P1,000 a month for 25 years. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

"Over the next two years, Citibank raised its offer to P66,500 until it reached P150,000 a month, but it was still short of the appraised fair rental value," Tañada said.

UP refused this offer and presented a counter offer of $10,000 a month or its peso equivalent.

Citibank, however, stood firm on its offer of P150,000 a month with no provision for escalation.

"Just a little over a week ago, with all venues for an amicable settlement exhausted over three years of patient but fruitless negotiation, UP President Francisco Nemenzo finally wrote Citibank a letter demanding that they vacate the Forbes Park property, as provided for by the lease contract," Tañada said.

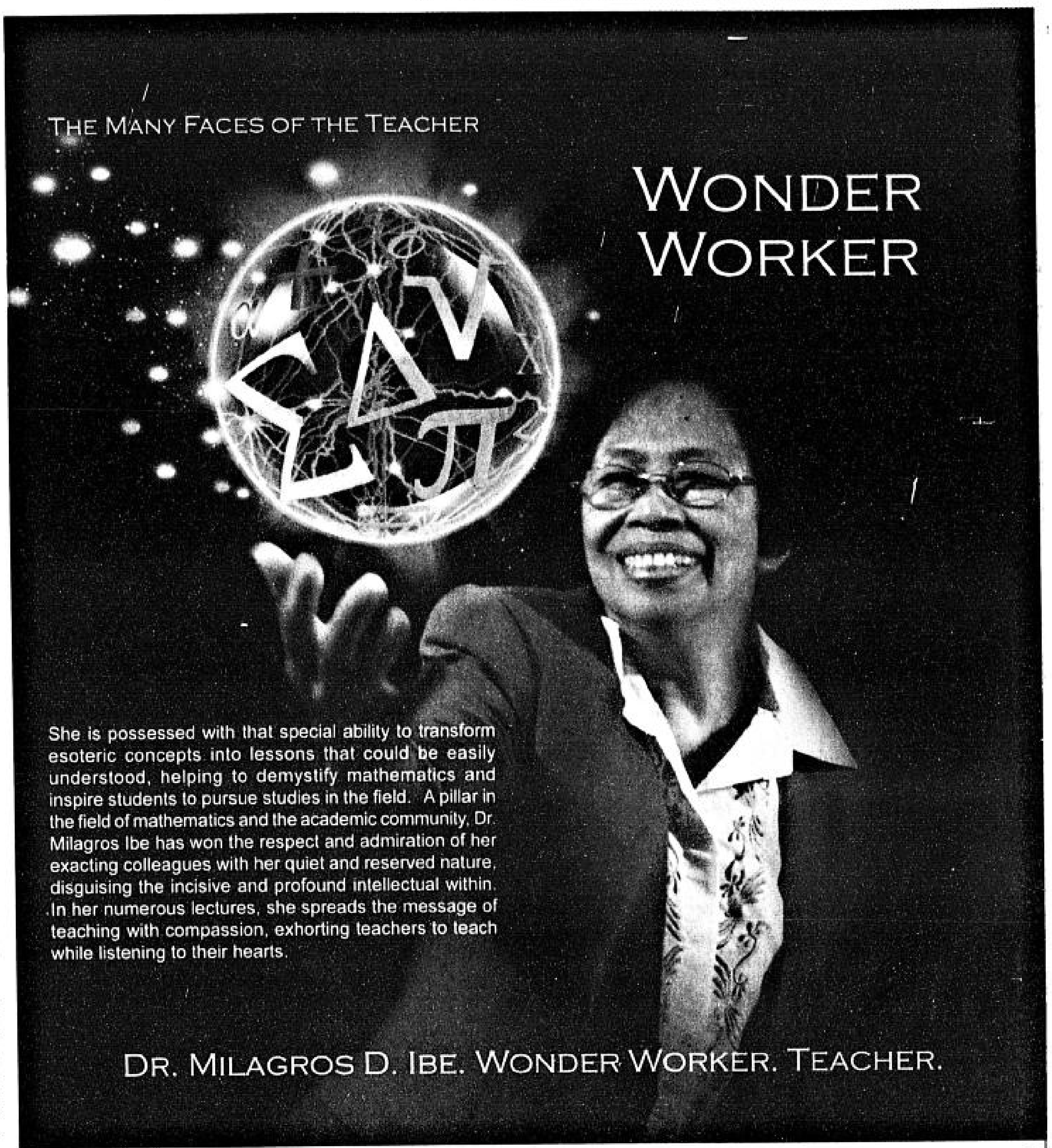
He noted that UP has successfully pursued its claim to other properties previously covered by the Laurel-Langley Agreement. He cited Shell's depot in Pandacan, Manila for which the oil company had agreed to pay UP the amount of P75 million over the next 25 years.

He added that UP is about to sign another agreement with 3M Philippines over the use of the university's property in Muntinlupa for the company's manufacturing operations.

Tañada said that Citibank has been doing business in the Philippines since 1902 and "we would like to think of Citibank as a reliable partner and friend."

However, he couldn't help but wonder: "Which Citibank has UP been dealing with—the noble institution of the website, or the arrogant, overstaying master who still thinks he can do as he pleases with the poor natives."

"I hope that its present country head, Mr. James Hunt, helps us make up our minds," he said.



THE MANY FACES OF THE TEACHER

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She is possessed with that special ability to transform esoteric concepts into lessons that could be easily understood, helping to demystify mathematics and inspire students to pursue studies in the field. A pillar in the field of mathematics and the academic community, Dr. Milagros Ibe has won the respect and admiration of her exacting colleagues with her quiet and reserved nature, disguising the incisive and profound intellectual within. In her numerous lectures, she spreads the message of teaching with compassion, exhorting teachers to teach while listening to their hearts.

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Engineer shot in Iraq out of danger

From page A1

that he entered through Turkey. That is the nearest entry point to Mosul," said Ambassador Roy Cimatu, special envoy to the Middle East.

Hired by Siemens

In the wake of the ambush, the officials called on Filipino workers in Iraq to be "more security-conscious," take extra-precautions and confine their movements to secured areas.

Agence France-Presse said the ambush victims were employed by the German company Siemens to set up a local mobile telephone network.

"Two cars carrying engineers, translators and bodyguards came under automatic gunfire around 6 p.m. on a bridge in the Al-Ridai neighborhood. Only one vehicle managed to speed off," police Col. Hashem Ahmad told AFP.

"In the second car, an Indonesian engineer, an (Iraqi) driver and bodyguard were killed while the Filipino (engineer) was wounded," he added.

Earlier this year, Siemens won an $8.6-million contract to provide equipment to mobile operator Asia Cell to develop the GSM network in northern Iraq.

In June, Siemens withdrew all its German employees from Iraq for security reasons.

More than 55 foreign civilians have been killed in Iraq since March.

Pasia was the second Filipino to flirt with death in Iraq in the past two months. De la Cruz was saved from beheading in July when the Philippines pulled out its military contingent from that country in response to demands by Iraqi gunmen holding him.

Victory sign

Pasia was recuperating from a wound in the right arm, officials said.

"He's safe, he's being attended to," Foreign Undersecretary Jose Brillantes said.

Officials showed reporters a photocopy of a picture of Pasia lying in a hospital bed, his right arm in a cast, and flashing a victory sign with his left hand.

Cimatu said that so far, the Philippine agreement with Kuwait, Jordan and Saudi Arabia to stop Filipinos from crossing into Iraq was working well.

"I would like to say that it has improved a lot already after the directive and the cooperation of the host government of prohibiting Filipinos going inside Iraq, specifically Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Jordan," he said.

Ban review

Cimatu said that the government was still "closely" studying proposals to immediately lift the ban on the deployment of workers to Iraq.

"The government is studying this very closely, and in fact, we are awaiting the arrival of Charge d'Affaires [Eric] Endaya to provide us the latest assessment because the situation in Iraq changes so rapidly that our assessment last month must be very different today," he said.

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GLS Sport M/T (Dsl)	805,000	80,750	33,904	24,294	19,543	17,187	15,332
GLS Sport A/T (Gas)	848,000	107,200	35,716	25,592	20,587	18,105	16,151
Grand Sport M/T (Dsl)	935,000	105,250	39,380	28,218	22,699	19,962	17,808
Grand Sport A/T (Gas)	980,000	127,000	41,275	29,576	23,792	20,923	18,665

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SC junks transfer to tax court of P25-B tax raps vs Lucio Tan

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court has denied the government's motion to transfer the P25-billion tax evasion cases against taipan Lucio Tan to the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA).

In a one-page resolution, the tribunal denied "with finality" Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo's petition, which asked the court to modify its July 13 ruling that revived the cases and to order the Marikina Metropolitan Trial Court (MeTC) to transfer them to the CTA.

Benipayo had argued that the cases should be transferred since the CTA, under Republic Act 9282, had been vested with "exclusive original jurisdiction" over violations of the National Internal Revenue Code.

He added that the Marikina MeTC also has yet to take full jurisdiction over Tan and his co-accused since they have not been arrested.

In a unanimous decision, the SC on July 13 reversed the rulings of the Court of Appeals and the Marikina Regional Trial Court which both affirmed the March 1999 decision of the MeTC to dismiss the tax evasion cases against Tan and several officers of Fortune Tobacco Corp.

The high court also nullified the decision Marikina MeTC Branch 75 to junk the nine counts of tax evasion against the accused and ordered it to continue hearing the criminal cases.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, August 24, 2004
Bartholomew, Apostle

1st Reading: Rev 21:9-14
Gospel: Jn 1:45-51

Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the one that Moses wrote about in the Law, and the prophets as well: he is Jesus, son of Joseph, from Nazareth."

Nathanael replied, "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." When Jesus saw Nathanael coming, he said of him, "Here comes an Israelite, a true one; there is nothing false in him." Nathanael asked him, "How do you know me?" And Jesus said to him, "Before Philip called you, you were under the fig tree and I saw you."

Nathanael answered, "Master, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!" But Jesus replied, "You believe because I said: 'I saw you under the fig tree.' But you will see greater things than that.

"Truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Commentary

BARTHOLOMEW is a surname: "Bar" means "son of", just like Mc and O' and Fitz in some surnames. The first three gospels never mention Nathanael, and the fourth gospel never mentions Bartholomew. It's probable, most scholars say, that they were one and the same person under different names. In the first three gospels Bartholomew is always mentioned with Philip, and in the fourth gospel Nathanael is always mentioned with Philip-a further reason to suspect that Bartholomew and Nathanael are one man.

Under the name of Nathanael he appears in two places in John's gospel. In chapter 1 Jesus sees him coming and says "Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!"-the opening of a familiar conversation. In the other passage (chapter 21) we learn that he came from Cana in Galilee. Under the name of Bartholomew nothing is said of him in the first three gospels; he is only a name on the list. But there is an apocryphal Gospel of Bartholomew, which is known for the splendor of its prayers. For example, Mary prays, "O God, great and all-wise, king of the worlds, beyond description, unutterable, you who established the greatness of the heavens and all things by a word, you who out of darkness fastened together the poles of heaven in harmony, you who wrought form in formless matter, order in disorder, light in misty darkness, you who settled the earth in its place and filled with blessings her who is the nourisher of all things...."

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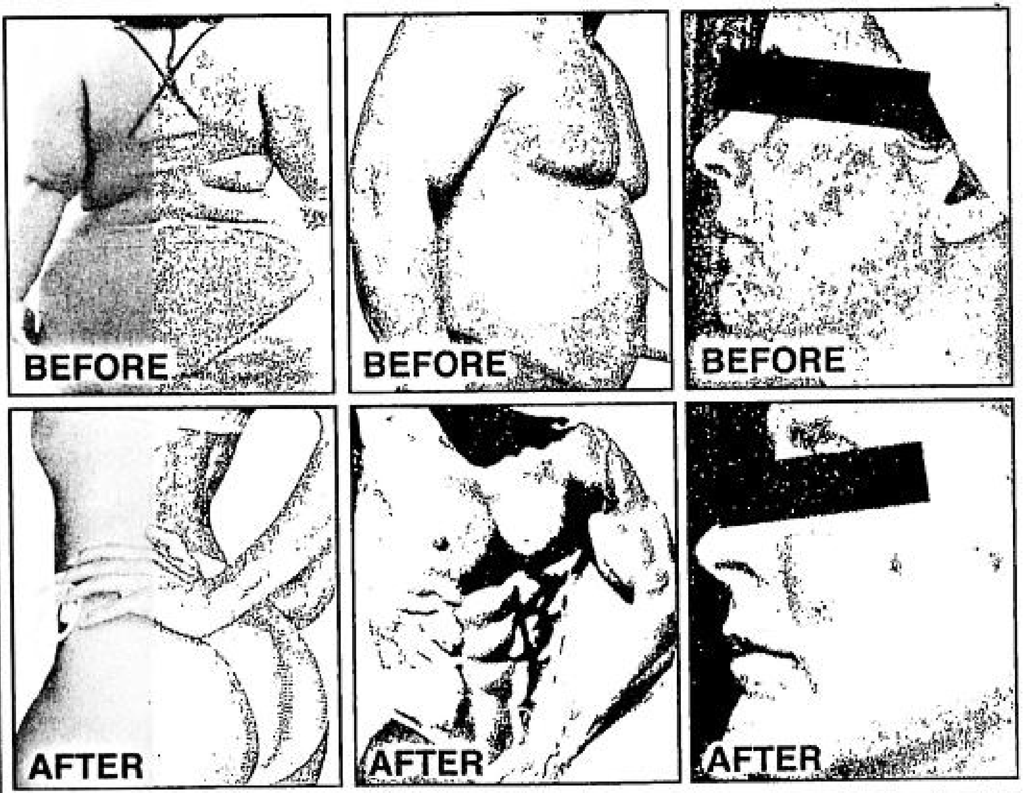

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RP already in midst of fiscal crisis—GMA

From page A1

audience where the speech was given—the PNP (Philippine National Police) turnover ceremony, not before the business community," he said.

Citing the definition used by the International Monetary Fund and rating agencies, Purisima said: "A crisis is when a country is in default, its deficit is not manageable, and it has no access to foreign capital markets. Clearly, this is not the case for the Philippines."

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong objected to the proposal to declare the country in a state of fiscal crisis.

"Why should we say that we are in a fiscal crisis when we are not? I declare that we are not yet in a fiscal crisis," she said.

Amatong explained that the country would only be in a fiscal crisis when the government could no longer pay its debts. The government is still capable of doing so, according to her.

"We are far from a serious fiscal crisis yet but (the President's) declaration would allow us to avoid it," Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin said of President Arroyo's admission.

Salceda proposal

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the President's declaration of a fiscal crisis came from a proposal by Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, who had been advocating that the "first step to fiscal redemption is acceptance."

Salceda, who had broached the idea as early as June, said solving the fiscal crisis had become more critical, especially with the oil price and interest rate shocks, which had further weakened government finances.

He warned that if world crude prices stayed at $49 per barrel and US interest rates increased further, a crisis could erupt within 6 to 18 months.

"The situation is quite volatile, just waiting to be triggered and the triggers are just waiting to be pushed if we do nothing," Salceda said.

Boncodin said that by declaring a fiscal crisis, Ms Arroyo had set in motion a legal move that would allow her to tap into the tax share or internal revenue allotment (IRA) of local government units (LGU) to augment the national government's income. ***(See related story on this page.)***

She admitted that the President's proposed tax measures aimed at raising P80 billion and the cost-cutting measures aimed at saving P20 billion would not be enough to solve the government's fiscal problems.

"If we don't do anything now then we might go into an actual fiscal crisis. We really have no choice," the budget secretary said.

Investor confidence

Businessmen greeted with mixed reactions Ms Arroyo's statement that the country was in a fiscal crisis.

Sergio Ortiz-Luis said the President's admission was dangerous because it could erode rather than boost investor confidence.

"It's a double-edged sword," said Ortiz-Luis, president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation. "I think it should only be done as a last resort."

Ramon del Rosario Jr., chair of the Philippine-US Business Council, said "there was a risk that the statement might cause undue alarm.

"But we can mitigate this if we are able to project strong determination, unity and political will in addressing our fiscal problems," Del Rosario said. "I assume the President only meant to stress the urgent need to act now if we are to avoid very serious economic problems."

Nothing new

Guillermo Luz, executive director of the Makati Business Club, said the country's fiscal problem was not new but ordinary people did not understand it.

"We should first recognize that we are in a crisis and then move toward the solution," Luz said. "But we must deal with this right away without hitting the panic button."

In the Senate, administration senators said the country had been in a financial crisis for some time now.

"We have been in financial crisis since the past few years, and it is time for the President to be like a prudent head of the family," Sen. Ramon Magsaysay said.

Sen. Richard Gordon attributed the fiscal woes to "waste and abuse" of government power and assets, and the failure to expand the tax base.

Gordon warned that the economy would collapse if the government failed to act immediately to arrest the crisis.

He pushed for a national audit of all assets, government expenditures and total debt payments, fast-track infrastructure development, and drastically trim government expenses.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II said that the solutions should be "good governance and better tax collection, not new taxes."

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. cautioned the President against declaring a fiscal crisis at this point, saying it was tantamount to declaring that the government was bankrupt.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the Senate ways and means committee, said the country's fiscal management went wrong because "we failed to see that our debt was growing at an average 23 percent in the last two decades, and that the economy was growing at an average of 10 percent nominally in the last two decades."

"That means that the deficit is growing at twice the rate of the economy," he said.

Recto said the government had not "come out with measures for the economy to grow at a faster rate. If the economy grows at a faster rate, more people are employed and therefore there is a wider tax base because more people are paying taxes."

"Once unemployment and underemployment increase, you have a restrictive or smaller tax base. This is principally the cause why revenues are eroding, among other things," he added.

"The objective now is to make the economy grow at a faster rate so we can create more jobs and improve living standards. To help make the economy grow at a faster rate, you have to have macroeconomic stability," Recto said.

This could be achieved, he said, by balancing the budget. ***With reports from Ronnel W. Domingo and Michael Lim Ubac***

Declaration target: IRA

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BUDGET Secretary Emilia Boncodin said President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a fiscal crisis was meant to allow the government to get a slice of the internal revenue allocation (IRA).

Local government units (LGUs) get 40 centavos out of every P1 in taxes collected by the government.

Boncodin said the government wanted to avoid the legal debacle it suffered in 1998 when the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional its plan to impose a 10 percent reserve on the IRA of LGUs.

"This has to be done correctly and this time we think we will overcome all legal obstacles," she said.

First, Boncodin said the Department of Finance, Department of Budget and Management and the Department of Interior and Local Government must declare an "unmanageable public sector deficit" before it could recommend a reduction in the IRA.

She said the government would then consult with members of Congress and, later, with governors, mayors and barangay leaders.

Under the Local Government Code, Boncodin said the government could get up to a quarter of the IRA. Based on next year's IRA of P151 billion, the government could get a maximum of P37.75 billion but Boncodin said a more reasonable amount would be P20 billion.

"We have not yet decided how much but we will finalize it within a week's time," she said. "But we have to be sure that the cutbacks are feasible because we cannot agree to it if it means laying off all [our] employees."

The budget secretary expected a backlash from local officials as well as lawmakers, who would be affected by the President's plan to control their P20-billion pork barrel fund.

Boncodin said she expected foreign investors and credit risk watchers to react positively to Ms Arroyo's move, which, according to her, showed that the President means business in resolving the country's fiscal problems.

"We cannot go on saying that we have a good fiscal position because who will believe us anyway?" she said.

Governors oppose bid to suspend IRA release

From page A1

would hamper the delivery of basic services.

Aumentado told the INQUIRER in a phone interview that the national executive board also created a lobby group tasked with opposing the "Salceda proposal."

Singson

The lobby group is headed by Aumentado, and co-chaired by Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson.

Aumentado enumerated three reasons why local officials were opposed to the proposal.

- The move is unconstitutional, as it will violate the constitutional provisions that gave autonomy to the LGUs and entitled them to a share of the taxes collected by the national government.
- It will violate existing jurisprudence. The Supreme Court ruled that the national government could not hold the release of the IRA to the LGUs based on the case of a Batangas governor vs Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo.
- The suspension will paralyze the delivery of essential basic services such as health, education, water, power and livelihood to the people.

Under the Local Government Code, the IRA consists of 40 percent of the taxes collected by the national government. This allocation is further divided as follows: 23 percent for provinces, 23 percent for cities, 34 percent for municipalities and 20 percent for barangays.

Aumentado said the suspension of the IRA release for 18 months would mean an equivalent of P20 billion which, he added, the LGUs could not afford to lose.

He said the league had come up with a proposal that would help the government without sacrificing its IRA share.

One of these is for the LGUs to help the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs in the collection of taxes.

They would also assist in the President's poverty reduction program by spending 20 percent of their development funds for the delivery of basic services.

They are also willing to provide the counterpart fund if the national government would implement the projects in their areas.

The Liga ng mga Barangay was also drafting a resolution opposing the move to cut or suspend the release of the IRA allocation.

AUMENTADO

Marty Lim, Liga president, said the group was just awaiting the final proposal of the government.

Lim said the league had already agreed to waive its right to get revenues from the additional taxes which are being planned by the government.

Local tax collection

In the Senate, neophyte Senators Manuel "Lito" Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada suggested enlisting the services of local officials in heading off the fiscal crisis.

Lapid and Estrada—both action stars before running for the Senate—said local officials from barangay *tanods* (watchmen) to councilors, mayors and governors should engage in aggressive tax collection.

"Let's localize the collection of taxes," Lapid said.

The former governor of Pampanga said local officials should be empowered to collect taxes on behalf of the national government.

In return, the LGUs would receive at least 30 percent of the collected taxes in their barangays, cities or towns, districts or provinces.

He said a shortfall in the projected tax collection should be charged against the IRA of LGUs.

Estrada, a former mayor of San Juan, Metro Manila, said the same thing when asked about solutions to avert the economic collapse predicted by the UP economists.

"President Macapagal-Arroyo can tap barangay officials to assist the BIR in the collection of local taxes to help the government raise more revenues," he said.

He explained that barangay officials would be more effective in identifying business establishments and real estate property owners who should pay taxes.

Cut pork by half

In the House of Representatives, a number of legislators from various parties, particularly key House leaders, said they were willing to have their pork barrel allocation reduced by half to help ease the economic crisis.

But they want assurances that the executive branch will rechannel the funds to basic services.

Each House member is entitled to P65 million each in pork barrel per year, while senators get a bigger allocation of P200 million each.

Rep. Rolando Andaya (LP, Camarines Sur), chair of the House appropriations committee, said the "key word for the times is burden-sharing."

For his part, Salceda (Lakas-Kampi, Albay) said: "I don't have any problem making such a sacrifice."

"We must all contribute in lightening the load of government which is the budget deficit," said Salceda, chair of the House committee on economic affairs.

A paper prepared by 11 faculty members at the the University of the Philippines School of Economics recommended a set of measures to stave off a full-blown crisis, including the reduction of the pork barrel allocations of members of Congress.

The study suggested the pork barrel funds totaling P20 billion per year be reduced to P10 billion.

Rep. Jesli Lapus (NPC, Tarlac), who chairs the House ways and means committee, said he would agree to a cut in pork, "provided that cut goes to better infrastructure uses."

Party-list Representatives Renato Magtubo (Partido ng Manggagawa) and Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan) voiced all-out support for the recommendation to reduce the pork barrel.

"That has been our advocacy for a long time. We just want to have assurances that the pork barrel will go to basic services, such as education," Magtubo said.

Rosales summed up her agreement in this slogan: "Pork barrel for basic services!"

Party-list Rep. Teodoro Casiño said other Bayan Muna lawmakers would "not oppose moves to cut the pork barrel." ***With a report from Cynthia Balana***

GMA retains team of economic managers

From page A1

Bunye yesterday said Ms Arroyo had lunch in Malacañang with her economic managers—Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong, Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin and Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima—and asked them to remain at their posts.

"These are the only Cabinet officials the President has specifically mentioned who would stay on," Bunye said.

Correction

IN THE Aug. 22 issue, the front-page banner story misstated that former Sen. Benigno S. Aquino Jr. was assassinated upon his return to Manila after more than seven years in US exile. Aquino was killed after a three-year exile in the United States.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

The press secretary said Ms Arroyo would announce more Cabinet changes "in the next few days," but he did not say whether Energy Secretary Vincent Perez, who is overseeing the crucial privatization of the debt-laden National Power Corp. (Napocor), had also been asked to stay.

Perez had earlier been rumored to replace Amatong as head of the Department of Finance.

Ms Arroyo, who reshuffled other Cabinet posts last week, had been expected to make some changes in her economic team in her bid to reduce a P200-billion budget deficit that economists had described as unsustainable.

Businessmen have been urging Ms Arroyo to make up her mind on the composition of her economic team and remove some uncertainties on possible policy directions.

Jojo Gonzales, managing director of Philippine Equity Partners, said it was "reasonably positive" that Neri, Amatong, Boncodin and Purisima had been affirmed in their positions.

"At least, they can move forward with their respective plans," Gonzales said. "It's not that any of them are controversial or non-performers."

But Mike Moran, regional economist at Standard Chartered Bank in Hong Kong, said reforms undertaken by Ms Arroyo's economic managers had fallen short during her previous term.

"The only thing you can say this time around is that they have a far more friendly Congress. That may make it easier," Moran said, referring to the majority of pro-Arroyo lawmakers in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

Soriquez

Alberto Romulo, whom Ms Arroyo yesterday swore in as the new head of the Department of Foreign Affairs, told reporters that acting Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez and "probably" another Cabinet secretary would likely be replaced in the next round of Cabinet changes.

Romulo, whom former Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita replaced as executive secretary, said that Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas would be retained.

Before he and Ermita were sworn into their new offices by Ms Arroyo, Romulo said in a thanksgiving lunch that leaving the Office of the Executive Secretary (OES) was "personally wrenching" for him.

"When the President first intimated her intention to name me secretary of foreign affairs, I demurred. I believe, I told her, there were others more qualified and desirous of the post," Romulo said in his speech. "I sensed, however, that the President had already made up her mind."

Speaking before other Cabinet officials, family members, friends and the media, Romulo said that the post of executive secretary was not as powerful as it looks.

Upon his appointment as executive secretary in 2001, Romulo said he learned that his signing authority was minimal, largely symbolic and had to be cleared with one of his deputies—Ching Vargas, deputy executive secretary for administration and finance.

"If Ching Vargas did not give the go-signal, I signed [papers] at my own peril," he said.

Romulo said the Office of the President and the OES were still staffed by men and women who were very scrupulous with the people's money and "still outraged by abuse of power and influence."

He also praised Ms Arroyo for her "model governance" and courageous decisions, particularly those involving the coconut levy cases, nullification of the Piatco contract for the Naia Terminal 3 project, quelling of the Oakwood mutiny, and the saving of hostage Angelo de la Cruz.

Ermita

"During our stay, I can say without hesitation or reservation that we always took the more difficult path of honor and integrity in public service," said Romulo.

Ms Arroyo had praised Romulo as the "epitome of integrity" in her administration.

Romulo said he was thankful that Ms Arroyo had named Ermita as her executive secretary. He said Ermita was "an excellent administrator and a topnotch communicator."

Ermita laughed off reports that he would stay as executive secretary only for one year because he wanted to work on his comeback as a representative of Batangas. He said there were even reports that he wanted to return to Congress to become Speaker.

Palace sources earlier said that Ermita would be eventually replaced by new Presidential Management Staff chief Rigoberto Tiglao.

Tiglao was presidential chief of staff until he was named PMS chief. Former National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales took over Tiglao's previous job. Gonzales was, in turn, replaced by newly retired Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr.

Like Ermita, Gonzales also laughed off an INQUIRER report that he would only be at his new job for four months as the position of presidential chief of staff would be abolished.

According to Palace sources, Gonzales would be named ambassador to Malaysia.

"In that case, I have to start learning Malay," he quipped. ***With a report from Reuters***

Germany offers to help solve Boracay murders

By L. B. Salaverria

THE GERMAN government has offered to give technical assistance to help the investigation of the Boracay murders involving two German nationals—one, a victim, and the other, a suspect.

An official of the Bundeskriminalamt or the BKA, the counterpart of the country's National Bureau of Investigation, arrived in the country recently to follow up the case, said NBI Interpol chief Ricardo Diaz.

German property developer Anton Faustenhauser, Swiss-born Hong Kong gallery owner Manfred Schoeni, Hong Kong-based British architect John Cowperthwaite and the German's maid Erma Sarmiento were all found stabbed dead in Faustenhauser's Boracay mansion in Malay town, Aklan in May this year.

Later, police filed criminal complaints against German national Uwe Frizel, who works for Faustenhauser, and Filipino worker Chito Catalogo for the deaths. Three others were unnamed. Frizel denied involvement in the gruesome killings.

BKA liaison officer Detlev Wilke went to Boracay with Diaz last week to inspect at the Dolce Vita mansion. They stayed in the area for four days, said Diaz. Although Wilke is based in Bangkok, the Philippines is included in his area of concern.

He offered assistance in conducting forensic examination on the many pieces of evidence recovered from the crime scene and even pledged to donate DNA kits to the investigators. A DNA kit costs around P18,000 each.

"The Germans want to know what really happened. They want to know the evidence against Frizel, whether he is really involved or had worked with other men in the killing," Diaz said.

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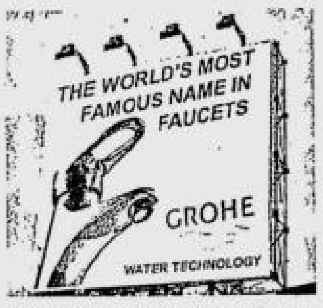

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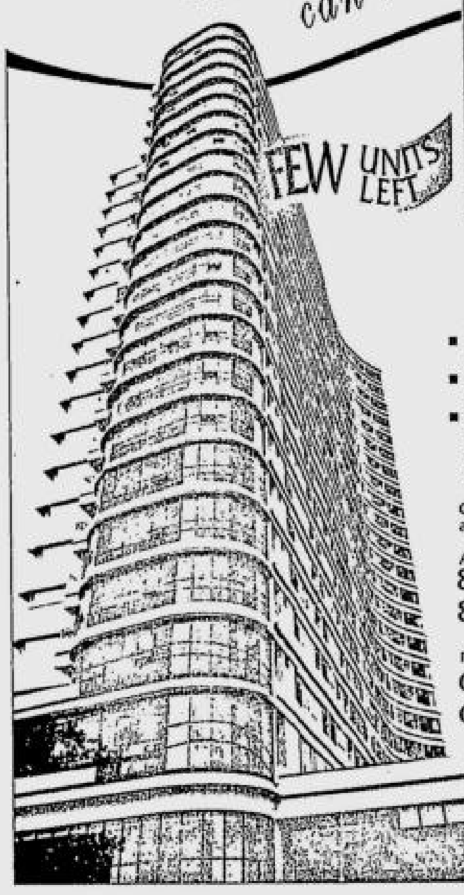

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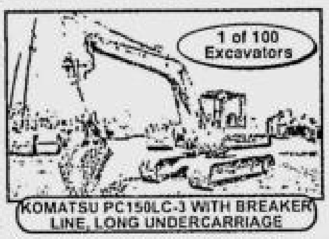

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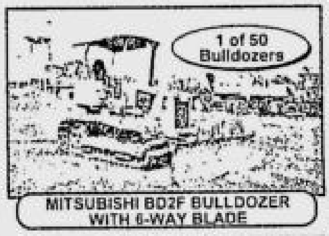

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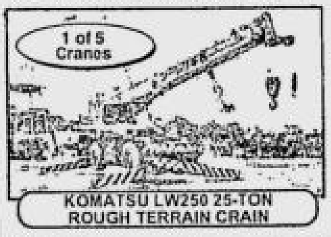

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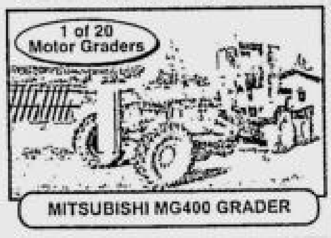

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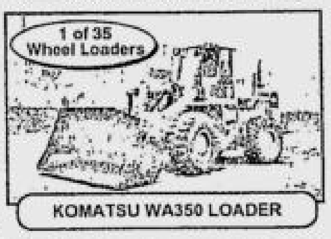

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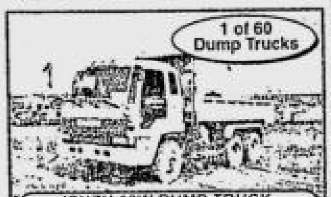

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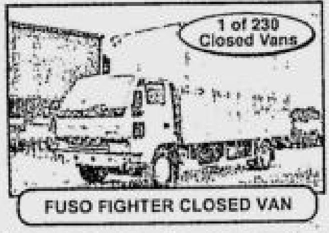

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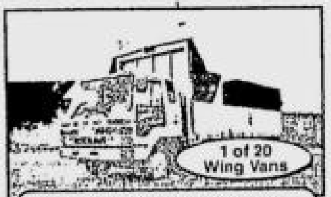

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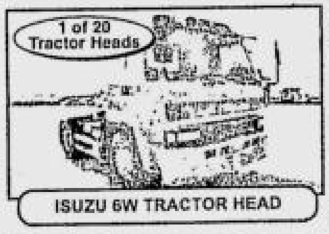

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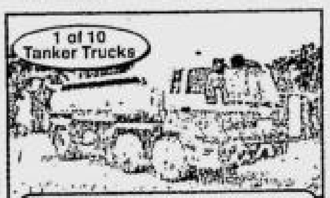

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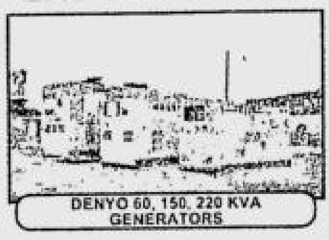
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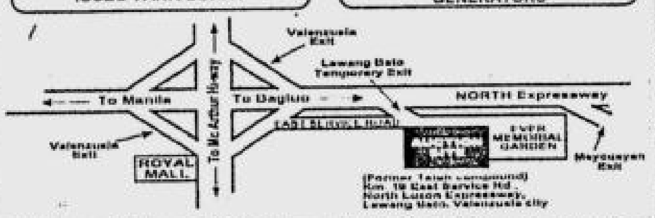

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Bird flu in pigs takes world closer to pandemic–WHO

PENANG; Malaysia—The reported discovery of a lethal strain of bird flu in Chinese pigs has taken the world closer to a human flu pandemic but there is no need to panic yet, the World Health Organization said Monday.

WHO regional director for the Western Pacific, Shigeru Omi, warned however of a "long battle" that could last several years before bird flu is wiped out in Asia due to poor management and surveillance of animal husbandry.

He was speaking at a news conference here shortly before China's agriculture ministry denied the flu was found in pigs this year. The ministry did not say whether it had been discovered in pigs in 2003, as reported by a respected Chinese researcher.

Omi told reporters later that the WHO office in Beijing was trying to contact the researcher—Chen Hualan, head of the China National Avian Influenza Reference Laboratory—to get more information.

"So far cooperation with the Chinese government has been excellent and collaboration with the Chinese authorities has been transparent and open. I hope the same spirit will continue," he said.

Asked about the threat of a global epidemic if pigs had been infected, Omi said: "Of course it's a little bit closer but how close we don't know. This is one factor we have to monitor very closely."

The WHO needed to study how widespread the virus was among pigs, he said. "At this point, there is no need for the global community to panic but it doesn't mean we can relax. We need to remain vigilant."

The Chinese researcher told a conference in Beijing last week the lethal H5N1 virus was discovered in pigs in the southeastern province of Fujian in 2003 and in "another place" in 2004, but only on one farm.

Scientists have warned that if pigs are infected, the virus could mutate to a more lethal form which could spread more easily to humans. Pigs are a "mixing vessel" in which viruses swap genes.

H5N1, the most deadly strain of the bird flu virus, has killed 27 people across Asia this year. The WHO fears it could mutate into a highly contagious form that triggers the next global human flu pandemic.

"The WHO view is that this is a long battle that we have to fight for several years at least," Omi said. "We cannot finish it this year because the virus is circulating among poultry, wild birds and migratory birds.

"There is always a chance that this virus will gain the ability to transmit on a human-to-human basis."

Omi said the WHO did not recommend vaccinations to fight bird flu because "surveillance for animals especially in this region is inadequate and it may give a false sense of security."

He praised Malaysia's efforts to contain a recent outbreak but urged the region to "redouble and triple" cooperation to prevent a possible pandemic.

"We must come up with a more operational communicable disease surveillance, which also deals with important elements like management of animal husbandry," Omi added.

Thailand, Vietnam, China and Malaysia have reported new cases of bird flu in poultry following the outbreak earlier this year that led to the culling of millions of birds, devastating poultry industries.

Malaysia's Health Minister Chua Soi Lek earlier told reporters that all seven people hospitalized with flu-like symptoms had tested negative for bird flu. *AFP*

A PALESTINIAN woman holds a picture of a relative jailed in Israeli prisons, during protest in the West Bank city of Nablus, Aug. 22. The number of hunger-striking Palestinians in Israeli jails has almost doubled to 2,900 in the week since the protest was launched. REUTERS

US troops, Shiite rebels battle near Najaf shrine

NAJAF, Iraq—US troops and Shiite rebels fought fierce battles in the holy Iraqi city of Najaf on Monday, with multiple explosions and gunfire echoing around a sacred shrine held by followers of a radical cleric.

At least 10 explosions, some sounding like artillery shells, rocked the area near the Imam Ali mosque, where the Mehdi Army militia of Moqtada Sadr have defied the interim government of Prime Minister Iyad Allawi for nearly three weeks.

Shrapnel landed in the courtyard of the gold-domed mosque, whose outer walls have already been slightly damaged in fighting since the eruption of the rebellion which has killed hundreds and driven oil prices to record highs.

In news that may calm jittery oil markets, Iraq's crude exports were back to normal on Monday for the first time in two weeks. Exports had been sharply reduced due to sabotage and threats from militants.

Oil rose to nearly $50 a barrel last week, although prices later eased. NYMEX crude futures for October were trading at $47.04 a barrel on Monday.

The fighting around Iraq's holiest Shiite Muslim shrine eased by mid-morning, while US tanks pulled back from positions held on Sunday when they were as close as 800 meters to the compound.

Overnight, a US AC-130 gunship blasted rebel positions after a weekend of fruitless talks between Sadr's aides and religious authorities to hand over the keys of the shrine to Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most respected Shiite cleric.

In an apparent relaxation of Sadr's demand that the Mehdi Army guard the mosque even once it is handed over, a top Sadr aide said Shiite authorities would be responsible.

"The religious establishment will be in charge of security and they should have their own security force," said Sheikh Ahmed al-Sheibani, also a Mehdi militia commander.

Speaking to reporters inside the mosque after the bout of fighting eased, Sheibani also said the cleric's fighters would become "normal citizens" if US forces returned to their bases and the southern city became stable.

The uprising is a brazen challenge to Allawi who took over from US-led occupiers two months ago and faces the daunting prospect of getting Iraq ready for elections in January.

His government has tried to defuse the crisis with a mix of threats to storm the shrine and peace offerings.

The elusive Sadr, whose whereabouts are unknown, has at times appeared to accept government demands only to then reject them. Allawi has insisted Sadr disarm the Mehdi militia and take his grievances to the political arena.

The shrine has been the focus of the rebellion that has also triggered violence in seven other southern and central cities, including Baghdad.

Serious damage to the mosque precincts could enrage millions of Shiites and fuel hostility to the US presence in Iraq. *Reuters*

Israel builds more settler homes upon US go-signal

JERUSALEM—Israel is building 100 new homes in a settlement outside Jerusalem, political sources said on Monday, after Washington signaled it could accept growth in Jewish enclaves on occupied West Bank territory.

Construction of the new neighborhood at Har Gilo, already home to some 120 settler families, began earlier this month and is due to be completed by the end of the year, the sources said.

It was not clear if the new project would expand Har Gilo onto undeveloped land. The United States, the key Middle East mediator, hinted on Saturday it could accept construction within the existing boundaries of settlements, after previously insisting on a building freeze.

Palestinians said the US move undermined the peace process and their dream of a viable state in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Bush administration said it was amenable to some limited growth in West Bank settlements to help embattled Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon push through his plan to withdraw from occupied Gaza amid opposition from his far right.

Washington had long called on Israel to suspend settlement building in accordance with a US-led "road map" to peaceful Palestinian independence in the West Bank and Gaza.

But the "road map" has been stymied by persistent violence.

Israel blames Palestinian leaders' failure to rein in militants waging an almost four-year-old revolt. Palestinian leaders blame constant Israeli A rmy raids which they say provoke violence.

Witnesses and medics said Israeli troops patrolling the Gaza border overnight shot dead an unarmed Palestinian in Rafah, a refugee camp known as a militant stronghold. Military sources said soldiers had opened fire at a suspected gun nest.

Palestinians, who fear uprooting Gaza settlers is a cover for strengthening Israel's hold on bigger West Bank enclaves, accuse the United States of tearing up its own peace plan. *Reuters*

Darfur talks reopen

ABUJA, Nigeria—Pushed to end what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis, envoys of Sudan's government gathered in Nigeria on Monday for talks with rebel leaders in Sudan's bloodied western Darfur region.

Majzoub al-Khalifa Ahmad, a Cabinet minister and government delegate to the last, failed Darfur peace talks in July, led Sudan's government delegation to Nigeria's capital, Abuja, for what are to be one-day talks.

Two rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement, assembled high-level delegations for the talks.

Eighteen months of conflict in Darfur have killed tens of thousands and driven 1.2 million others from their homes.

Tensions between nomadic Arab tribes and non-Arab African villagers exploded in February 2003 when the two Darfur rebel groups took up arms over what they regard as unjust treatment by the government in their struggle with Arab countrymen.

The United Nations, the United States and others accuse Sudan's government of backing pro-government Janjaweed militia in a violent ethnic-cleansing campaign of killing, rape and razing communities. *AP*

WorldBriefs

Bangladesh schools close after blasts

DHAKA—Riot police patrolled a tense Bangladeshi capital and a number of schools and colleges were closed on Monday in protest at a weekend grenade attack on a political rally that killed 19 people, witnesses said. The closures followed a call by the main opposition Awami League Sunday for an indefinite nationwide education strike after earlier having called a general strike across the country for Tuesday and Wednesday. Strikes and violent demonstrations erupted across Bangladesh Sunday after the attack on the Awami League rally the previous day, but there were no reports Monday of any overnight disturbances. Saturday's attack occurred as Awami League leader Sheikh Hasina was finishing a speech outside the party's headquarters in Dhaka. Many party officials have called the blasts an assassination attempt against the main opposition boss. *AFP*

Hepatitis C vaccine

SYDNEY—A vaccine to combat hepatitis C could be a decade away after Australian scientists discovered a naturally occurring antibody that immunizes people at high risk against the potentially fatal disease. A study of 160 Australian prison inmates by the University of New South Wales found four who had built up an immunity to hepatitis C despite repeated exposure to the disease through intravenous drug use. Andrew Lloyd, who conducted the study and published its results in the latest edition of the Journal of Infectious Diseases, said scientists would attempt within the next decade to artificially replicate the naturally occurring antibody that had built up in the prisoners' white blood cells. Hepatitis C, a blood disease that causes cirrhosis and cancer of the liver, affects more than 200 million people, or three percent of the world population, according to figures compiled by the World Health Organization. *AFP*

North Korea calls Bush imbecile

SEOUL—North Korea described US President George W. Bush on Monday as a tyrannical political imbecile who put Adolf Hitler in the shade and said Pyongyang could see no justification for talks with the United States. Six-party working-level talks on the communist North's nuclear weapons ambitions had been planned for August but have yet to materialize. The date for more senior talks is also in question, although diplomats note Pyongyang often raises its rhetorical voice before attending talks or compromising. *Reuters*

Southeast Asia passport checks

KUALA LUMPUR—Hi-tech terrorists are using increasingly sophisticated methods of passport forgery and Southeast Asian countries need to strengthen their controls, officials and experts said Monday. The warning came as the Australian government launched its first training program at a new US-backed Southeast Asian counterterrorism center in the Malaysian capital Kuala Lumpur. Twenty-four officials from seven Southeast Asian countries and East Timor are taking part in the four-day program on "advanced training in document examination. As technology becomes more sophisticated and terrorists become more knowledgeable, the regions' officials too need to equip themselves with the latest information to stay ahead," said Zainal Abidin Zain, director of the Southeast Asian Regional Center for Counterterrorism. *AFP*

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Thieves take Oslo masterpieces

OSLO—Armed robbers stole "The Scream" and another masterpiece by Norwegian artist Edvard Munch on Sunday in a bold daytime raid on an Oslo museum in front of dozens of terrified tourists.

Two masked robbers ran into the Munch Museum, threatened staff with a handgun and forced people to lie down before grabbing "The Scream," an icon of existential angst showing a waif-like figure against a blood-red sky, and "Madonna."

Some stunned visitors said they feared they were victims of a terror attack. The men simply walked out the front door—with one painting bumping on the ground—and escaped in a stolen black Audi car driven by a third man, police said.

Worth millions of dollars, the pictures are among Munch's best-known, even though he produced several versions of both 1893 works. "Madonna" shows a mysterious bare-breasted woman with flowing black hair.

"We're following all possible leads... but we don't know who did this," police detective chief inspector Kjell Pedersen told a news conference. One of the thieves spoke during the robbery—in Norwegian.

The wooden frames of the paintings were found smashed and scattered along an Oslo street and the car was separately found abandoned a few kilometers away with no trace of the paintings.

Munch, a founder of modern expressionism who lived from 1863 to 1944, painted the two works as part of a series about love, angst and death.

Art experts speculated the thieves might want a ransom as the works are too well known to be sold except to a reclusive collector. But, Pedersen said: "We have heard nothing."

Police cordoned off the museum, informed Interpol and alerted airports and border crossings. No shots were fired but a female guard was treated for shock. Up to 70 people were in the museum at the time and perhaps 30 witnessed the robbery.

"I saw one of the men put a gun right behind a guard's head," said Richard Marcus, a 63-year-old Texas businessman visiting Oslo. "It took a long time for the police to come." Czech student Marketa Cajova said many feared the attackers were terrorists. "He had a black face mask," she told NRK radio. *Reuters*

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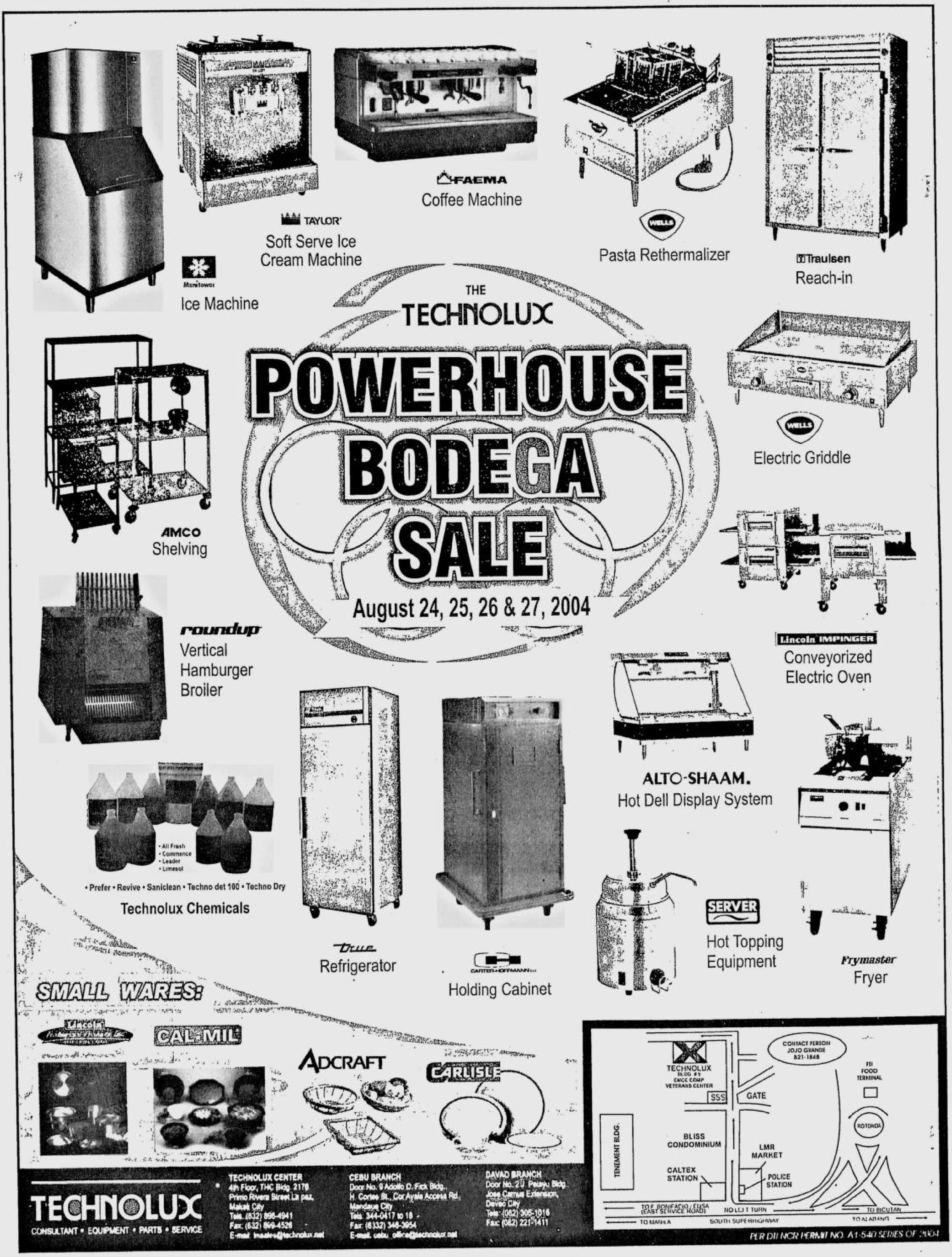
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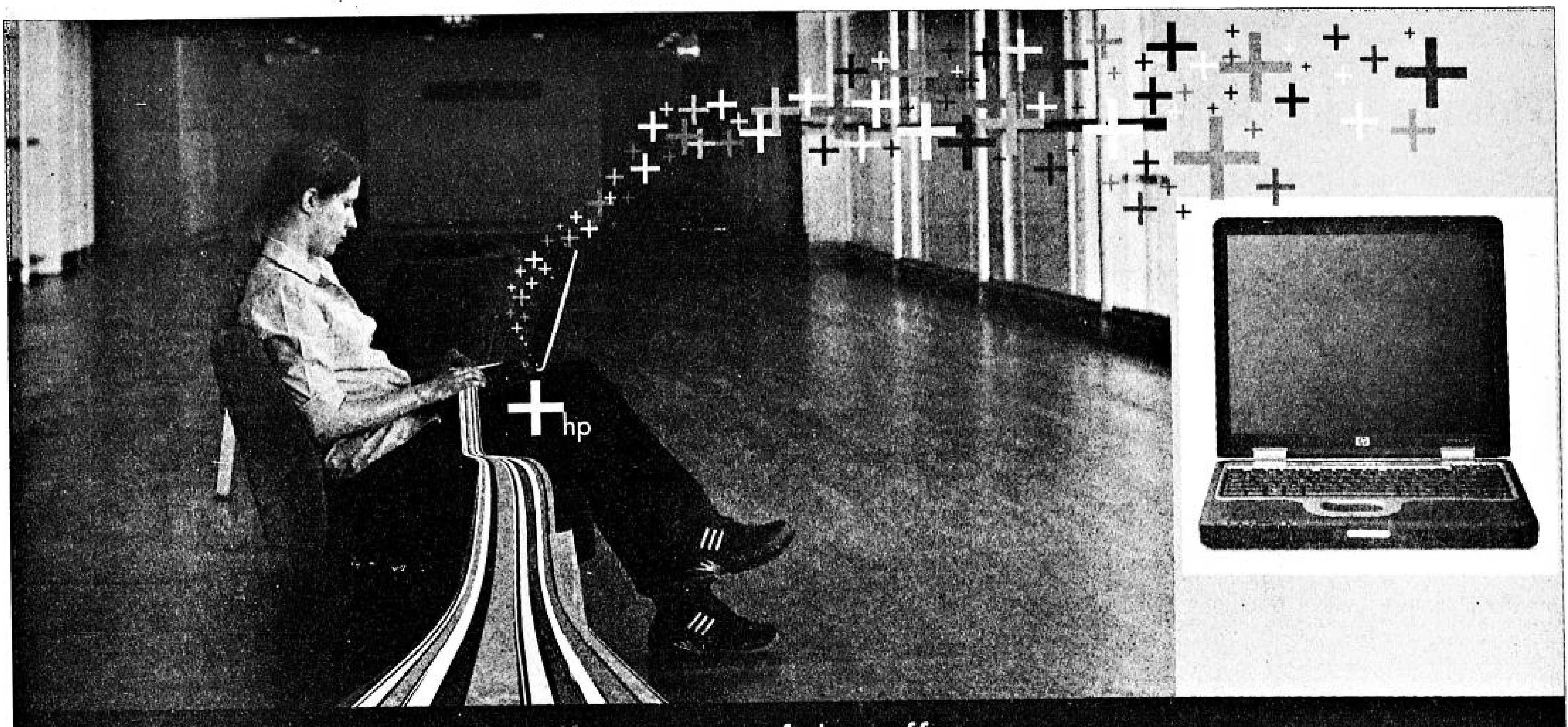

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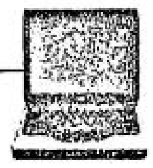

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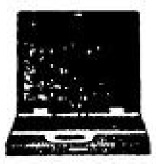

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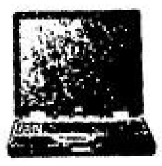

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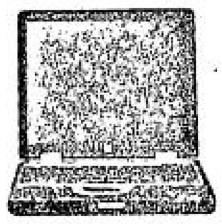

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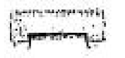
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'Consuelo de bobo'

EDITORIAL

A MEASURE of the frustration of the people over the poor performance of our athletes in the Olympics is the demand of Filipino overseas workers in Greece to field Manny Pacquiao as a member of the Philippine boxing team. They stopped only after they were told that professional boxers are banned from the Olympics.

So far it has been one disappointment after another, one defeat after another for the Philippine team at the Olympics. Officials of the delegation have tried to put up a brave front, saying that Jasmin Figueroa scored a sensational first-round victory over the third-best woman archer in the world and that its swimmers set three Philippine records. Those are *consuelo de bobo*. But where are the medals? It's the medals that count in any Olympics, or in any sports competition for that matter.

Why is Philippine sports in such a sorry state? One factor is the lack of a comprehensive sports development program. Oh, yes, consultations were held from 1995 to 1997 with various sports stakeholders on a sector plan for Philippine sports. The Australian Sports Commission and the Australian Institute for Sports were asked to help prepare the sports plan. After two years, the Philippine Sports Commission produced an eight-volume plan. But in 1998 a presidential election was held, and the plan was forgotten. Now it is gathering dust in a dark corner of the PSC.

In contrast, Singapore has been carrying out a master plan that focuses on certain sports where it can excel. The same is true of Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong. And look what it has done for these smaller and less populous countries: they have been winning medals in international sports contests.

The Philippines has no extensive and widespread sports talent search and development program. Yes, it has the Palarong Pambansa, but it does not seem to have developed athletes of international caliber. The search program has to be more aggressive.

The program, if one is finally adopted and carried out, has to concentrate on the sports where Filipinos have a strong potential to excel. Forget sports like basketball or swimming where height and heft count a lot. We have to focus on such sports as boxing, taekwondo, shooting, archery and bowling. And in boxing, we have to concentrate on the lighter weights.

The government and the private sector will have to put their money where their mouth is. An annual budget of about P500 million is not enough to adequately support the training programs of about 35 national sports associations and their grassroots projects.

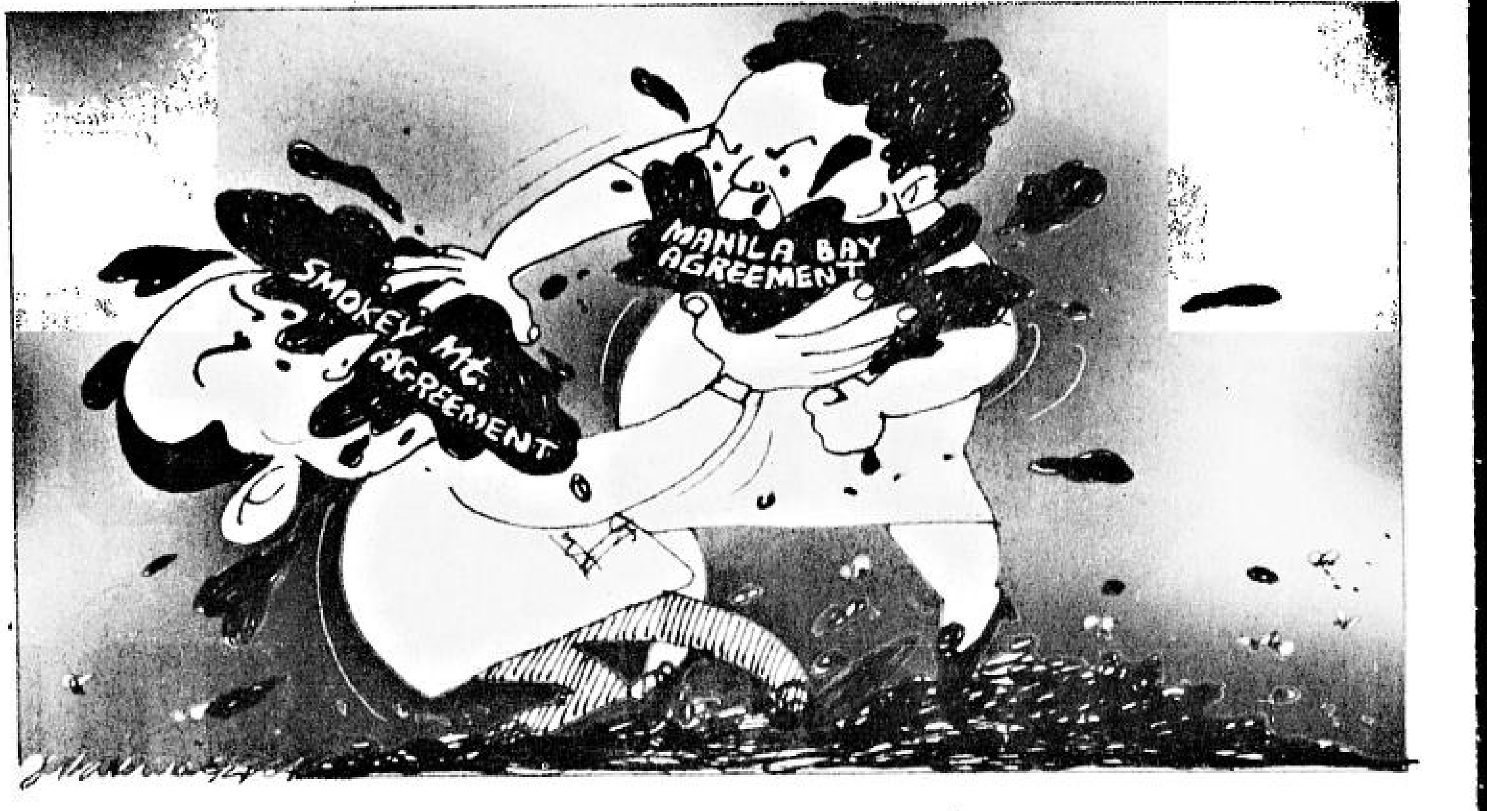
If the government wants to give sports a shot in the arm, it will have to give it a bigger budget that would pay for increased training support, better equipment, proper nutrition and more frequent international exposure for the athletes. The private sector could be asked to finance the "importation" of foreign coaches to train our athletes for international competition.

Politics has to be banished from Philippine sports. Because of politics, whatever sports program we have is being directed and supervised by the wrong people. The late President Ferdinand E. Marcos introduced politics in sports when he appointed cronies as directors of the sports associations. Since then the quality of Philippine sports has deteriorated greatly. President Corazon C. Aquino created the Philippine Sports Commission, but it soon became a dumping ground for political lame ducks.

When the federation system was adopted to recognize national sports associations, they were required to have the widest base. But most of the regional sports associations are "ghost" associations that don't have any activities or projects. Julian Malonso, former president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, complains that their directors are used only for election purposes and the elections of national sports associations are rigged.

Before World War II, the Philippines was one of the sports powers in Asia. In recent years, it has been relegated to the lower rungs in the Asian Games and the Southeast Asian Games and has won a rare silver or bronze in the Olympics. In Sydney it suffered a complete shutout, and it may again face the same fate in Athens unless the taekwondo jins and the track and field athletes stage a miracle in the closing days of the Olympics.

We cannot forever rely on the "last two minutes" approach, where we begin our recruitment and training only a few months before an international competition. A master plan for sports has to be adopted and funded sufficiently and carried out, not by politicians, but by sports experts and specialists.



Blurred memories and IOUs

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A TUESDAY and Thursday column didn't allow us to mark, last Saturday, the 21st anniversary of the late Sen. Benigno Aquino's murder on Manila's airport tarmac. But INQUIRER columnist Solita Collas-Monsod spoke for many by writing: "We have Ninoy to remember with utmost gratitude."

Aquino's memory, pollsters say, is increasingly blurred, specially among the young. Most dither in soaps of the day: from dubbed *telenovelas* to noontime sud shows, ironically starring Ninoy's daughter, Kris.

"We Filipinos have a special problem," Ateneo University's Bienvenido Nebres, SJ, observed. "We have very little collective memory of the past. We tend to live in a perpetual present...and get by on feeling, without a national memory and historical perspective."

"Many find it difficult to distinguish between movies and reality. They fuse into one," Father Nebres wrote in 1993. "Thus, we cannot see very well into the future."

But what if Aquino caved in to the dictatorship's threats-cum-incentives? Suppose he peddled the "New Society," along with Juan Ponce Enrile, Eduardo Cojuangco, Estelito Mendoza, Fabian Ver, Herminio Disini and other cronies?

That tarmac killing probably would never have occurred. Instead, Ninoy today could be primus inter pares of Danding, Juan Ponce, Estelito and "Count" Disini. He'd be younger but richer, because he was smarter. Indeed, what does it profit a man if he loses his soul but squirrels away his bank accounts?

Aquino, however, would have been whittled down from hero to heel in a Philippines under a president-for-life: Imelda. Cory wouldn't be today's respected national figure. Instead, she'd just be another "Blue Lady" withering away.

Kris soap shows would "star," seven days a week, the First Family for Life. Would she anchor the coverage of Marcos' burial in Libingan ng nga Bayani?

As dissent would be banned, Teodoro Locsin Jr. would stew in his father's Fort Bonifacio cell. The Age of Australia would again intervene, so Amando Doronila could go into exile. In lieu of the INQUIRER, a censored Daily Express would be home-delivered. "Compulsory unification of opinion," Justice Robert Jackson said, "achieves the unanimity of the graveyard."

But Ninoy held firm. They cut him down before we heard him deliver his arrival speech.

"It is ironic, after martial law has been allegedly lifted, that the Supreme Court last April ruled it can no longer entertain petitions for habeas corpus for persons detained under the Presidential Commitment Order," he planned to say. "(This) covers all so-called national security cases and which under present circumstances can cover almost anything."

What if the Court firmly ruled on habeas corpus petitions (GR L-33537-73) lodged by Ninoy, Sen. Jose Diokno, publisher Joaquin "Chino" Roces and other journalists after their arrest?

Marcos justices glossed over Leviticus' unyielding yardstick: "You shall not defer to the great but, in righteousness, shall you judge your neighbor." Ninoy paid for that lapse.

Yet, back in February 1973, Aquino already revealed the steel that led to that bloody tarmac. "Five months after Marcos declared martial law, the Bangkok Post ran articles" that constituted the first challenge to the "New Society," Newsbreak's Miriam Grace Go wrote. The author? Sen. Benigno Aquino, then held incommunicado in Fort Bonifacio's maximum security cells.

For "three days the Bangkok Post ran 'the Aquino Papers'—a world exclusive," Go wrote. The late Theh Chongkadihij, then Post editor, protected his sources by personally handling every step—"from receiving the papers to writing the page one blurbs."

"I learned about the Bangkok Post article...when our visiting privileges were suspended," former President Aquino writes in a by-lined box within Go's special report. "My daughter and I were not allowed to visit Ninoy for 43 days as a punishment for the Bangkok Post publication."

How did Aquino slip his papers past Juan Ponce Enrile's guards? By an old journalist's device: use the obvious to conceal. Women guards frisked the Aquinos after every Ninoy visit. So, daughter Ballsy fished out tissue papers and Ninoy's manuscript from her school uniform pocket and lifted them forward. "The WAC must have thought Ballsy's papers were from school," Cory recalls. "She didn't bother to examine them."

"Can you get these papers out of the country?" Ninoy's aide, the late Alfonso Policarpio asked me at the Press Foundation of Asia. Along with the late Luis Beltran and other recently released journalists, we were still under "city arrest."

The "carrier pigeon" we chose was an Air India manager-friend. "Would you carry, as part of company mail, an envelope to Theh?" I asked. He didn't flinch. He stuffed the Aquino papers into his attaché case—and winked.

Only after I took a United Nations posting in 1975 did I learn from Theh: "Your friend even hand-carried the envelope to me. And he didn't ask any questions."

While serving as a UN conference officer in New Delhi in 1992, my retired Air India friend called to say hello.

Today's freedoms permit the slopping up of media trivia. But on the anniversary of a half-remembered martyrdom, we should ask: What was the bill? Who paid? And why?

* * *

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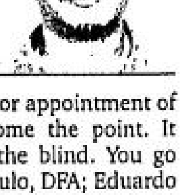
Forget Edsa II



THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE SIGN on the wall was Dinky Soliman's firing as social welfare secretary a couple of months ago and her replacement by Noli de Castro in that post. De Castro, of course, would eventually back down and go for the housing portfolio instead, along with the National Anti-Poverty Council, as would Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, in the face of public outcry against a move that smacked of barefaced opportunism, and Dinky would remain head of the DSWD. But the message read loud and clear: The days of the NGOs, or their nominal participation in government, were over. The days of the *trapo*, or their complete control over government, were back.

What made this possible was that GMA was elected President, something she could not claim during the three and a half years that she had been in power. Indeed, despite her repeated assertions of deserving the post not merely legally but morally, she was compelled to acknowledge the contributions of civil society to putting her in power. An acknowledgment that led to Dinky and others being appointed to positions of power—relatively minor compared to those given to the 11th-hour, self-proclaimed Edsa II heroes from the military, like Angelo Reyes, but positions of power nevertheless. The firing of Dinky, though aborted, signaled the end of the honeymoon.

Henceforth, it said, GMA would no longer be beholden to the Edsa II forces. They would have no place in her government. GMA could now claim a mandate from the people, not from those who overthrew her predecessor. Of course, many of the Edsa II forces had helped her win a second term, but that didn't matter. If she owed anyone, it was most of all her political allies in the coalition (including her appointees to the Comelec and to cash cows like Pagcor and the PCSO), the local officials, and the power brokers who upped the ante on unscrupulousness to make sure she would win. In sum, the traditional power blocs in the country. Or what has since come to be known by the felicitous term, *trapo*.

The current division of spoils, also known as government reorganization or appointment of Cabinet officials, drives home the point. It should be patent even to the blind. You go down the list—Alberto Romulo, DFA; Eduardo Ermita, executive secretary; Avelino Cruz, defense; Raul Gonzalez, justice; Ignacio Bunye, press; Florencio Abad, education; Noli de Castro, housing; Ace Durano, tourism; Mike Defensor, environment; Edgardo Aglipay, PNP; F. Licuanan, Clark/Subic development; Hermogenes Ebdane, national security adviser; et al.—and you'll find yourself looking at a *trapo* gallery. Yes, including Butch Abad, who has been a disappointment since the Commission on Appointments during Cory's time refused to make him agrarian reform chief on the ground that he was "pro-farmer" (that seemed to have taken the sting off him) and Mike Defensor. Above all, Mike Defensor. So young and so, well, let's just say, in a hurry.

You look at the roster, and you won't find a single progressive there. Not even the handful of ex-activists who merely show that when activists join government they do not make government activist, they merely become ass-lickers. Often in the extreme: Many of them have become rabid supporters of the Iraq war. Well, GMA has pointed out the fundamental criterion for being a member of her official family: "They have to agree with me."

The NGO stalwarts, former or not, who supported GMA in the elections may howl about being betrayed all they want, though Dinky is no longer doing so, but they brought it upon themselves. GMA's election campaign already clearly showed the direction she was taking, which was down a more *trapo* path than even Joe de Venecia, Ramon Mitra and Doy Laurel had taken. Neither De Venecia nor Mitra nor Laurel showed the same scale of willingness to break all the rules to keep power.

GMA's media supporters would later say exultantly that her victory represented the pushing back of "the politics of personality," which had favored movie stars and other popular personalities over the last decade. Well, at the very least that isn't true at all: Her own Vice President, Noli de Castro, and newly elected Senators Bong Revilla, Lito Lapid and Jinggoy Estrada, not to mention Jamby Madrigal and Mar Roxas, who had no small help from well-known show-biz personalities, show that the news of the death of "personality politics" is grossly exaggerated. But more than that, even if you grant that GMA's victory was a victory against "personality politics," what was it a victory for?

Quite simply, it was a victory for *trapo* politics. It was a victory of *trapo* politics.

The pillars of civil society in particular who kept saying GMA was "the lesser evil" because she was not intellectually challenged like FPJ should think again. Which is the lesser evil, personality politics or *trapo* politics? Because that was what the choice between GMA and FPJ—a ridiculous one in that there was a clear alternative, who was Raul Roco—represented. It was a choice between a recent trend, which was movie stars invading the Senate and Congress, and the trend before that, which was *trapos* ruling the Senate and Congress.

Indeed, *trapo* politics raised to the nth degree. How else call the blatant use of the Comelec to pervert the entire electoral process (it began with making it the hardest thing in the world for voters to register), the even more blatant use of taxpayers' money to campaign, and the still more blatant use of allies in Congress to railroad the count. What victory against show-biz politics? It was nothing more than the revenge of the *trapo*.

Forget Edsa II. This division of spoils has just driven the last nail on its coffin. But to think it was the instrument that loosed all this upon us!

On nuke energy

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

UNTIL now, the Philippines has failed to get any medal from the Athens Olympics, be it gold, silver or bronze, and it appears that there's no hope we'd win one this year. Contrast this with the record of Thailand which at this time has already two gold medals and two silvers, and Indonesia which has one silver and one bronze. Indonesia, a major sports force in our region, has 120 million people, so that it has a far deeper bench to choose from than the Philippines. But we have a far bigger population than Thailand with its 60 million, yet it has beaten us to the gold. If our two neighbors can produce Olympic-class athletes, there is no reason why we can't.

* * *

Every time our team returns from a big sports event abroad, there is recrimination as to why we did poorly, but this is "seasonal." ***Pagkatapos ng*** **Olympic fever nothing happens, and it's the same dismal performance. Why? What can be done about it? Evidently we have to push sports development beyond lip service. By the way, it would look like we're really scraping the bottom of the barrel if we give a hero's welcome to archer Jasmin Figueroa, who lost in the round of 32.** ***Huwag na muna.*** **Maybe next time.**

* * *

PLDT top man Manny Pangilinan flies in from Hong Kong every time this event is staged. Last week DBP director Ramon Paterno requested that the bank's board meetings be held an hour ahead of schedule so he could watch the event, to which he also invited Fernando Zobel. Senators Mar Roxas and Dick Gordon and Secretary Cito Lorenzo never miss it, as does Dato Arroyo, President Macapagal's youngest son. What do these people have in common? They are all faithful fans of the Ateneo basketball team, part of the legion of Ateneo alumni who have kept their links to their alma mater by faithfully showing up at its UAAP games in signature blue.

* * *

But the frenzy of the Ateneo crowd is never as fervid as when its team plays against De La Salle, for the two schools have been fierce rivals since the 1950s. I remember my mother, who sent six boys to the Ateneo, keeping vigil with a rosary before her lighted altar a day before an Ateneo game. Today the traditional rivals remain the stellar attractions of the UAAP even if they are not competing for the championship. Tickets to an Ateneo-La Salle game are a scalper's dream. Last Sunday's game two sent P150 tickets soaring to as much as P1,000 per—if one could get them.

* * *

De La Salle alumni are also faithful, and among those who never fail to show up for their alma mater's games are former Finance Secretary Ramon del Rosario and former Interior Secretary Rafael Alunan (whose children, however, went to the Ateneo, so he's torn between two loves). Two years ago Ateneo wrested the PBA championship from De La Salle after a long period of lackluster performance, and the crazed alumni celebrated for a whole year.

* * *

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez was quoted as saying recently that the nation should perhaps begin considering nuclear energy as an alternative to fossil fuel energy. He doubtless said this in response to the spiral of world oil prices, which was triggered by a massive demand which oil producers cannot meet for a number of reasons. Perez's remark jibes with the renewed public interest in the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant, either to run it according to the original intent or convert it into a coal-fired plant.

The introduction of nuclear energy here in the late 1970s, however, was off to a wrong start. First, there was talk of graft and corruption as rumors of huge kickbacks from the builders of the BNPP to high Marcos administration officials swirled around. Then there were glaring defects in Westinghouse's construction, such as locating the plant astride an earthquake fault line in Bataan. Nuclear energy was also unacceptable to environmentalists. The long delays and the kickbacks doubled the costs, making the BNPP the costliest nuke plant in the world.

* * *

Since the late 1970s up to the mid-1980s, two waves of opposition surfaced against the BNPP. The first group consisted of Sen. Lorenzo Tañada, human rights lawyers Joker Arroyo and Rene Saguisag and a couple of others, and they succeeded in stalling the BNPP's opening. By the early 1980s the Marcos regime again pushed for it, and a second wave of oppositionists cropped up, which included Tito Guingona, Aquilino Pimentel, Rafael Recto and Alberto Romulo, lawyer Jaime Guerrero, environmentalist Sr. Aida Velasquez and this journalist, then a reporter for Mr. & Ms Magazine. With the help of scientists, the latter succeeded in bringing out the safety issues during hearings held by the Philippine Atomic Energy Commission. The coup de grace came when our group rolled out a long computer printout of defects during a hearing held by the Supreme Court. Seeing it, Chief Justice Claudio Teehankee turned pale and immediately banged the gavel that sealed the BNPP's fate. The Edsa Revolution ushered in the Cory government where Arroyo and Saguisag played a prominent role. About the same time, the accident in Chernobyl happened.

* * *

I am not against nuclear energy per se. But definitely the experts have ruled the BNPP unsafe. And even if it were not unsafe, knowing the kind of work ethic we have here, where maintenance is not an outstanding strength of our people, operating a nuke plant seems like tempting the fates. Besides, in other parts of the world, nuke energy is now a sunset industry saddled by problems such as expensive uranium fuel and cumbersome waste disposal. In oil-starved Japan, which uses a lot of nuclear energy, putting up new nuke plants is now banned.

Common misconceptions on family planning

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT'S amazing what women were willing to do to avoid or end a pregnancy in the days before contraceptives became commonly available, and amazingly, even today when family planning methods are supposed to be easily accessible.

A common belief then was that you needed to get the man's sperm out of your body as soon as possible if you didn't want to get pregnant. So women, as soon as the lovemaking ended, would jump up and down repeatedly to "jog" their partner's body fluids from their system, or even try to stand on their heads to hasten the flow.

And when they feared they were pregnant, women proved capable of the most amazing feats of physical derring-do: jumping from atop a flight of stairs, polishing the floor with coconut husks for hours on end, and even carrying heavy pails of water to induce a miscarriage.

Other women would douche with a home-made concoction of vinegar, in the belief that the acid would "kill" the sperm before they swim up to the uterus. Also widespread, to this day, is belief in the contraceptive powers of Cortal (a local aspirin brand) and Seven-Up, again anchored on the belief that the highly acidic mixture would kill the sperm. Then, of course, there are various measures that women would resort to just to terminate an unwanted pregnancy, from inserting tubes, reeds or bent wire up their vaginas to induce labor, to visiting the local *hilot* for deep and painful massages to dislodge the fetus, or for herbal concoctions or even drugs that are supposed to get contractions going.

The awful truth, of course, is that despite the pain and the effort, most of these word-of-mouth methods of preventing or ending a pregnancy were unsuccessful, or if they did succeed, did so only at the cost of the health or the life of the woman. And even when these desperate measures worked, they often made the woman incapable of getting pregnant or bearing a pregnancy to full term ever again.

* * *

THOUGH most Filipino women of reproductive age profess to know about the modern methods of family planning, and even say they no longer want to have children or want to limit or space the number of their children, less than half are currently using a family planning method. And if they do use a method, they end up using the less effective ones, including the risky and dangerous ones mentioned.

How did such a situation come about? Why the great divide between information and motivation, knowledge and behavior change?

To find out, The Social Acceptance Project-Family Planning Project (TSAP-FP), with funding from USAID, commissioned AC Nielsen to conduct a research study among Filipinos mainly to identify their knowledge, attitudes and beliefs about family planning, including the myths and misconception on the topic, as well as their perceptions and attitudes toward family planning.

The study, named "Project Dynasty," was conducted early last year among 230 respondents, male and female, 15-34 years old, single and married, belonging to Class DE and broad C, and residing in Metro Manila, Cebu and industrial areas in Cavite, Batangas and Laguna.

Among the more significant findings of the study was that the quality of family planning information that reaches the majority of Filipinos leaves much to be desired.

* * *

JUST to demonstrate how poorly that information is received, perceived and practiced, here's a list of "perceived effects" of family planning methods as recounted by the respondents of "Project Dynasty." And just to make things crystal clear, from the scientific point of view, all of them have been proven baseless and untrue, though you would be surprised how many Filipinos, even those who consider themselves well-informed on these matters, continue to believe them.

On condom use, the respondents said among the drawbacks were: the condom itself could be left inside the vagina after sex, and sexual intercourse would be painful for both the man and the woman. Others believed that there could be no satisfaction with condom use "because it is too slippery." A common perception, and all-too-true, is that it's risky for a man to suggest using a condom as it could "offend your partner because she might think you find her dirty."

Respondents also expressed apprehension about IUD use as, among other things, it could "melt inside the body and doctors will not be able to find it anymore"; "may be washed away by strong menstrual flow"; and, so common it has become urban legend, the IUD may "become entangled around the man's penis and the man and woman can no longer be separated." (Of this last, really a physical impossibility since the IUD is placed inside the uterus, too far for the average penis to reach, I say, "We should be so lucky!")

* * *

SOME women say they are afraid of getting on oral contraceptives, more commonly known as the pill, because it "does not dissolve well so some residue is left in the woman's uterus, which can cause cysts, infection or worse, cancer." (Of course, all pills taken orally dissolve in the stomach before they enter the bloodstream.)

Other women complain of the pill causing headaches, irritability (as the President so famously cited), weight gain or loss, dry skin and loss of (or reduced) libido. Others also expressed fear that "when it does not work, the baby is born with abnormalities."

Of injectable contraceptives, one side effect of which is that menstruation ceases, women said they were resisting it because it "could cause tumors because one does not menstruate"; "causes one to be irritable because menstruation is not regular"; or "prevents menstrual flow since the blood remains in the uterus."

How do these myths and misconceptions spread and, more important, remain so credible? More on "Project Dynasty" tomorrow.

Open letter to Sen. Sergio Osmeña III

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

DEAR Serge,

How could we have guessed many years ago in Washington, D.C. that our country would be reduced to this sorry state when the height of economic vision appears to be sending Filipinos out of the country to find jobs? I'll tell you: I thought that after the elections (because of course it was political suicide to have done so earlier) the President or some other high-ranking official would have addressed us forthrightly about the state of the nation and said, "*Mga kababayan*, we are in crisis. We are broke. The foreign debt has ballooned to critical heights. We have a run-away population without the resources to feed, cloth, educate and house all our people. The educational system is in shambles; we are producing graduates that are semi-literate and incapable of communicating in either English or Filipino, let alone compose a business letter. Massive malnutrition will ensure that the majority of future generations will be mentally deficient thereby worsening the problem of unemployment and poverty."

Needless to say we heard nothing of that kind. What we did get was the travesty of elected representatives squabbling over committee chairmanships (they're still at it), while the country reeled under the burden of foreign debt and those wicked weekly spiral in oil prices.

Worse, neither have we heard nor read of any innovative, imaginative plan to get us out of this economic morass. All we're fed are plans to raise taxes on, among other things, oil. I agree this has to do with world prices, but remember when we had a buffer stock? Now this thing about raising fuel prices as we all know will impact on the cost of living since automatically, with the increased cost of electricity and transport, the prices of basic commodities will rise. I understand senators and congressmen have an allowance to take care of little irritants of the kind, so I presume that doesn't really affect you people.

I have also been waiting (and it looks like its either going to be a long wait or a useless one) to hear one elected official of this benighted country say that he is cutting his allowances in half or his pork barrel or something that will show that you are leading by example and that the sacrifices aren't purely on the side of the Filipino people who must be pulling their hair at the thought of a country run like hell. For what is the point of leaders who don't lead by example?

In the midst of all this misery, insecurity and uncertainty, I find that you have actually filed two bills (Senate Bills 496 and 497). Unfortunately in lieu of some brilliant piece of legislation that would alleviate the suffering and the deprivation that is part of the daily grind of the Filipino, your two bills will change the names of streets. Gee, Serge, I mean that's really meaningful. Like, alleluia, what a wonderful thing you've done for the cost of living.

You know, I used to hear that your grandfather was the best president we never had, that he was a real statesman and it was our tragedy that he lost that elections. I'll bet he never filed a bill of this nature. This type of bill is what you do so that (1) you can show you did something, and (2) none of your colleagues (with the exception of the wonderful Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. who had the vision to disagree) will argue with you. See, as far as you're concerned, it's not the type of legislation that's going to cost you any votes anyway since the majority of your constituents couldn't care squat simply because all their energies must be spent on finding the means to survive.

Now don't get me wrong. I sincerely believe that the late Senators Diokno and Tañada should have streets named after them. I just don't believe it should be Taft Avenue and España. Tell me that you have thought up ways to improve our infrastructure and build new roads and bridges that you can name after whomsoever you wish rather than the tired old no brainer of just renaming an existing street. It just makes it even more patently pathetic that we have no new infrastructure. How many hours are lost in Osmeña Highway alone when another road by the lake and another bridge across the Pasig would surely alleviate the commuters' suffering? That highway by the way is a good 40 years old.

I don't know what it is you expect to gain from changing the old names. Do you think it will erase the memory of the Americans or the Spaniards and history as well? Will it make Filipinos more patriotic? Changing Gandara to Padilla and Buendia to Puyat and Vito Cruz to Ocampo hasn't done the trick, so why should this?

Let me tell you we don't need this waste of time. What we do need are immediate answers to our economic problems and leaders who will stand side by side with us and not act like our oppressors. We need leaders with the imagination and creativity to find ways and means to attract investors, improve peace and order so people can walk the streets without fear and stop the proliferation of drugs and kidnappings and carnappings.

Had you told me that these bills were the idea of Senators Lapid or Revilla or Estrada, I would have understood. But you? Surely, you can come up with something of more worth to the people instead of wasting committee time arguing about street names. This is scary, Serge, because the introduction of these two bills makes me think that maybe you people don't have any viable answers to our problems.

God help you, and God help this country.

Fairyland

YOUNG BLOOD

Caroline Ann Marie Albarando

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

ONCE upon a time, there was a little girl who believed in fairy tales and fantastic stories. She dreamed of genies taking her away to strange lands where animals talked and fairy godmothers broke witches' spells; where heroes vanquished giants and sleeping beauties slept in castles for a hundred years.

The little girl knew that if she could only find a four-leafed clover, she would be able to summon a leprechaun who would help her get to fairyland. She tried so hard to find one but couldn't. So she decided to become a princess in England when she grew up. Perhaps, that was better, since princesses always had all the fun.

One day, the little girl watched a movie and saw how Mary Poppins entered fantasyland by stepping on pictures. Excitedly, she took out her favorite fairytale book, found the picture she wanted and stepped on it. Nothing happened. Puzzled, she stamped and jumped on it, to no avail. Why couldn't she get to the land of the enchanted White Bear, east of the sun and west of the moon?

Many years later, I came upon my three-year-old niece tearing apart, with obvious relish, her storybook. I suppose it fascinated her to hear the sharp hiss of paper and see it torn to shreds. The book was beyond salvaging, and the pretty little imp just grinned.

It wasn't the first time our mini-library became one book poorer because of her. So for the nth time, I scolded my niece.

Then as luck would have it, I had a bright idea. I searched for a book I had not seen in years. There it lay on a dusty, forgotten corner looking every bit as ancient as when I last laid eyes on it.

"So, Chinita," I told my niece. "Would you like to hear a story?"

"Yes, titaaaaa!" she yelled and clapped her hands, her mischievous eyes lighting up in anticipation.

I opened the big, heavy book and several pages fell to the floor. Many were dog-eared, but the pictures were as bright as ever.

I showed her pictures of terrifying witches and goblins as I told her a story about a little girl who loved to destroy storybooks where magical creatures lived. One day, a wicked witch took the disobedient girl her to a faraway place where a warlock turned her into a very ugly toad. She was never seen or heard from ever again.

That solved the problem. Since then my niece took care not to drop any book, much less tear any of its pages.

The old book was a collection of fairy tales from around the world with enough stories and colored drawings to captivate the heart and fire the imagination of every child. It was a treasure trove of magic as I remembered it best.

Drawn to it once again after all these years, I went to my room and read through it just like I used to. And thus, I rediscovered my childhood.

Could I really have been one of those 12 princesses who danced the night away or traveled with Prince Ahmed and Sindbad throughout all of their adventures? Did I really once grieve with Little Two Eyes, Cinderella, Snow White and Lizina at the injustices they suffered at the hands of their relations or laugh with the Three Little Pigs, the brave tailor, and the clever hedgehog?

I was this princess or that peasant girl. I turned into the good fairy that granted people's wishes and made their lives better. I was queen of the realm and owned a unicorn and animals that talked. I knew I flew the skies as a swallow or a nightingale, and even then the elves in the forests were my friends.

Ah, it was such a magical world! What a pity, it vanished as I grew up.

Why is it that when we turn into adults, we betray our childhood? Why do we laugh at the little ones with their steadfast belief in an "other" world and tell them that such things do not exist. Why, when we ourselves once believed in it, too? We seem to think we are wiser, but are we?

I envy children because their knowledge, in a sense, is far greater than ours. For a time at least, they will not have to be bothered by the realities of life, and they can go on believing in what we label as fantasy. Their world is more imaginative, more creative, less tainted by acts of gross inhumanity. Oh what I would give to reclaim childhood's pure innocence and unwavering trust!

Sadly, time never stands still. It takes us along in its journey to infinity, and somewhere along the way, disillusion sets in. We learn in the most bewildering ways that there is a different kind of world out there to deal with, and that there magic doesn't count—nor will it ever again. Instead of knights in shining armor coming to rescue us, we soon take to wearing an invisible armor to shield ourselves from the pain of daily living. Walls are built and seldom breached. Welcome to the real world.

That little girl, who at the beginning of our story wanted to enter fairyland, finally gave up after trying so long and so hard. She was so frustrated that she cried for several days. Her heart was broken, and so was her belief. And she resolved to put away her fairytale book—never again to be opened till years later.

Now this isn't a fairy tale. That little girl, a long, long time ago, was me.

Caroline Ann Marie Albarando, 25, is a processing executive at Hong Kong Shanghai Banking Corp.

THEY SAID

Good workers

"Whether we're part of the coalition or not, the quality of our workers will always be appreciated in Iraq."
—National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales on the exclusion of the Philippines from the American-led Coalition of the Willing

Lollipop

"Malacañang now dangles a lollipop, a cheap shot. It's an afterthought, a rather amusing postscript."
—Sen. Joker Arroyo on offers to include him in the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council

Strength over size

"Size is not important; what matters is strength."
—Taipan Lucio Tan's advice to aspiring businessmen

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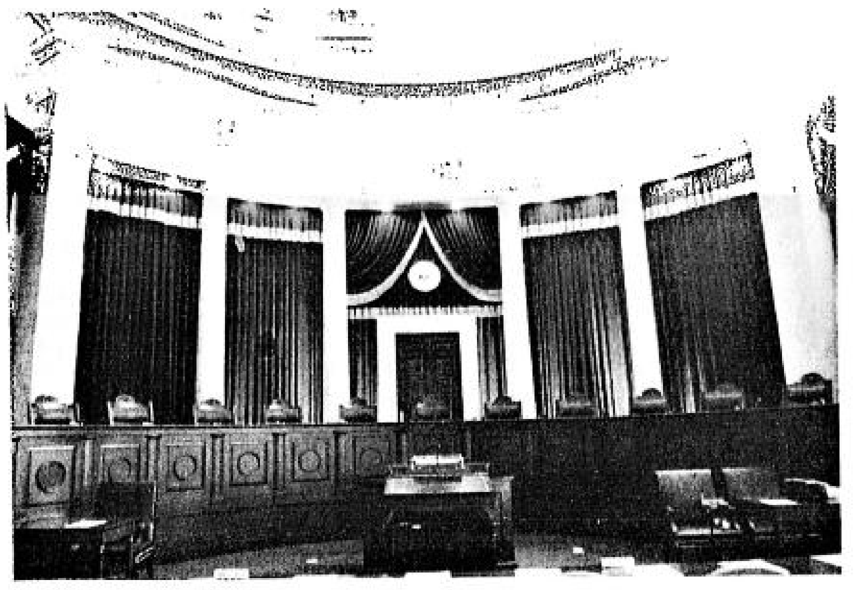
Go after tax cheats instead of law-abiding taxpayers

I'M an overseas Filipino worker working for Saudi Aramco for five years now. Frankly, I'm disgusted by the reports on how the government bungled the high-profile cases involving some P2 billion to P5 billion in collectible taxes. And to think that this administration now wants to tax law-abiding citizens and corporations to death by burdening them with more taxes that, in most cases, amount to double taxation (e.g., tax on text messaging). What are the people in government thinking? Isn't it enough that every text message is already charged a 10-percent VAT? That's 10 centavos for every peso value of text message sent locally. That's one peso for every P10 worth of text message sent abroad.

Government is shooting at the wrong target by insisting on collecting new taxes from a public already reeling from the high prices of basic commodities and from law-abiding corporations that are struggling to survive during these turbulent economic times.

Our government should focus instead on winning the numerous cases against tax cheats by removing public prosecutors who are in cahoots with them.

—ARMANDO DIMACULANGAN,
Davao City
Armando_2004speed@yahoo.com



A way to improve public services

IN THE UNITED States, there is a call for re-instituting the draft in order to guarantee that a true cross-section of American youth serve in the army in time of war. As it is now, America's wars are fought by poor blacks, hispanics and whites, although there are few well-off college graduates in the army, especially in the infantry. The main proponent of the measure is Rep. Charles Rangle of New York City's Harlem district, who believes there would be fewer wars if the children of the rich had to fight alongside everyone else. (Indeed, decisions to go to war are made by the rich. The poor fight them.)

The rationale for the proposal is: A personal stake in the outcome of an event is all important. This can be applied in other matters. Would our public school system be so bad if the children of the rich had to go through it? Would there be a hundred children in one class and one text book for every two children, as is the case now in Baseco? Would there be two and three class-shifts in schools such that the last-shift children go home in the dark? (After a week the teachers are worn out.)

Certainly, something would be done about our transport system if our public officials had to wait in the rain with hundreds of other ordinary citizens for a ride home after a long day's work. The same could be said about other government services, which are in such a bad shape precisely because the well-off and powerful don't use them and don't care enough to improve them.

Imagine the uproar if a congressman were shunted from one hospital to another like the poor woman who gave birth to triplets and couldn't find incubators to keep them alive.

Many of our communities lack drainage, adequate water, playgrounds and the people live in fear of evictions and fires. Needless to say, the presence of some influential people would help. What about the police and fire services? Wouldn't they do better jobs if someone influential were watching closely?

Those who can afford prefer private schools, cars and hospitals largely because the public services are so bad and the vicious circle spins more quickly.

As there would be fewer wars if the sons of the rich fought them, so there would be much better public services if the rich used them. Can we suggest that no one be allowed to legislate or implement policy on a particular public service if he/she does not use it. Much like the principle, no taxation without representation.

It's the kind of suggestion people call "interesting," but then dismiss as "very impractical." Before dismissing it, however, let's see if there isn't some way those who govern can experience the hardships of using the public services, and draw from that experience a resolve to improve them.

Can we, for example, ask our leaders to use public transport one day a week? Can the official himself or herself (and not necessarily their families) go to public clinics and hospitals for treatment when they have medical problems that aren't life-threatening? Can they (not their families) sleep one night a week in an urban poor area? While they are there can they ask the parents what the local school is like, and the police and firemen? Are there ranking officials willing to send their children to public schools for a year?

If there are no volunteers, we have a situation as anomalous as poor people fighting the rich man's war. Where will our officials get the motivation to improve the services if they do not get to experience the problems ordinary folks face every day?

—DENIS MURPHY,
Urban Poor Associates,
25A Mabuhay St., Brgy Central,
Quezon City

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How efficient is the Supreme Court

MR. Carmelo Aquino's letter (PDI, 7/27/04) that an agrarian case [G.R. No. 112526 entitled "Sta. Rosa Realty Devt. Corp. v. Court of Appeals et al.'] has been pending with the Supreme Court for almost 11 years shocked me. How many Edsa revolutions and administrations have passed, how many Supreme Court justices have retired in the last 11 years? Yet, the agrarian case has not been resolved.

Cases like this discourage people from taking legal remedies. No wonder they—especially the poor who cannot afford protracted litigations—are forced to take the law into their own hands or seek justice where it is swift and inexpensive.

I hope Mr. Aquino will update the readers on the status or outcome of the Sta. Rosa Realty case.

Incidentally, how long does it take on the average for the Supreme Court to dispose cases? It would be nice to know how they are doing up there!

—NITOY DEL MUNDO,
Brgy. Bagong Pook,
Calapan City, Mindoro

Let's review our Olympic program

I'M a government employee and an avid sports fan. I'm writing this letter to make an appeal to our sports leaders to review our country's Olympic program so that we finally get that elusive gold medal.

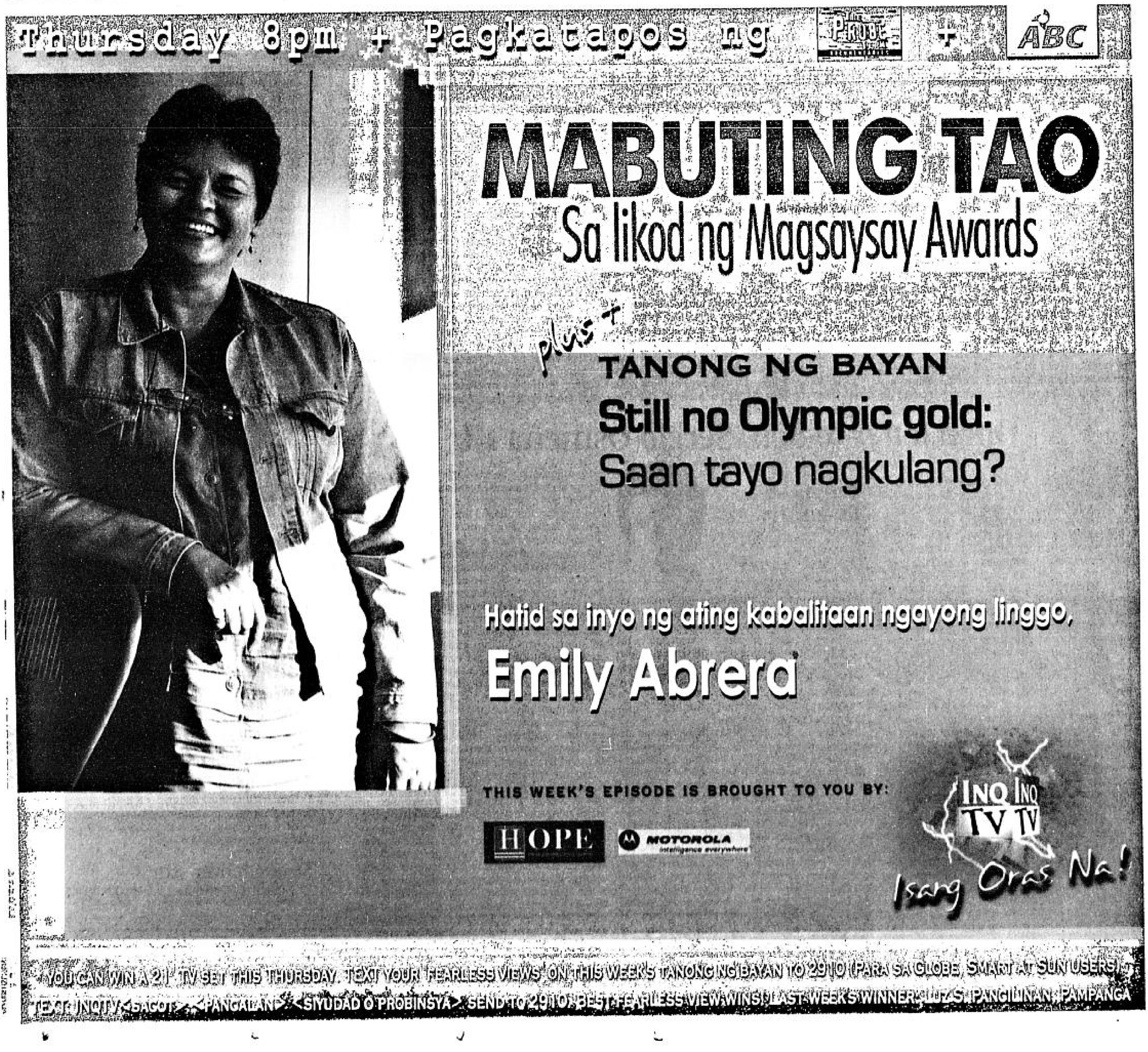
Thailand has already won a gold medal in weightlifting, assuring itself of a place among gold medal winners. And its boxers are still in the contest for another gold. It won its first Olympic gold in 1996, in boxing's featherweight division.

What I'd like to point out is why our country's sports leaders don't realize their wrong practice of sending athletes to the Olympics who don't stand a chance of winning a gold medal even in the Southeast Asian Games. What this country needs to do is develop athletes who can compete with the best in their respective sports.

But we are daydreamers, hoping *na makatsamba* to win a medal! This kind of mentality should be stopped! As I have pointed out earlier, a Thai weightlifter has won a gold medal (not to mention her two countrymen's bronze medals) and her opponents were from other Asian countries, like China, North Korea, Indonesia. The problem with us Filipinos is we would rather send athletes to compete in sports designed for physically bigger, stronger opponents, so we end up coming home without a medal.

In 1996, I stayed late to watch Onyok Velasco's losing effort to Daniel Petrov Bojilov and, you know what, I cried seeing Onyok land punches which were not counted by the judges. I am not ashamed to admit I cried because Ron de los Reyes, who anchored the fight with Ronnie Nathanielsz, cried too! It's for the Philippine flag!

—SAMANODEN GURO,
Block 47, lot 1, Maharlika Village,
Taguig, Metro Manila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MABUTING TAO
Sa likod ng Magsaysay Awards

plus +
TANONG NG BAYAN
Still no Olympic gold:
Saan tayo nagkulang?

Hatid sa inyo ng ating kabalitaan ngayong linggo,
Emily Abrera

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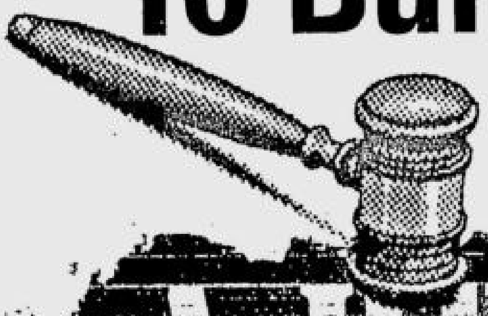
To Build a Strong Republic, Declare Smuggling A HEINOUS CRIME!



ENOUGH is enough!

Smuggling is sapping the nation's vitality. Like the terrorists and criminals with guns or in *barong*, the smugglers are subverting the economy and its capacity to sustain businesses and jobs. The SMUGGLERS are the silent but deadly ECONOMIC SABOTEURS and JOB BUSTERS. The government's capacity to deliver the 6 -10 million - job target in six years is in peril – if the activities of these job and business saboteurs are not stopped.

Smugglers steal anywhere between ₱ 150 billion to ₱ 200 billion a year from government by evading the payment of import duties, VAT, income tax, excise tax and other local taxes. This amount is almost equal to the annual government deficit!

Such an amount can finance the construction of 1 million low-cost housing units (wiping out in five years our housing backlog according to HUDCC Sec. Mike Defensor of 4.2 million in 2002). This amount could be used to build 11,611 school buildings composed of 30 classrooms with elementary and high school education or 348,340 additional classrooms assuming each classroom costs P500,000. A minimum of 3 million farmers could receive P58,056 each as farming subsidy. 11,613 30-sq. meter barangay health centers with minimum equipment worth P1.5 million could be put up. 19,352 kilometers of concrete road (two lanes, Portland cement, 6.7 meters wide, including earthwork and drainage) or 24,881 kilometers of asphalt road could be constructed.

A five-year revenue loss could well reach over ONE TRILLION PESOS, or one-fourth of the country's national debt!

These criminals have developed a nefarious system so deep into the bureaucracy with creative *modus operandi* that they have become so bold as to be able to solicit purchase orders even before concluding import transactions! Their arsenals range from the 'usual' techniques of mis-declaration, under-valuation and mis-classification of imports to the more sophisticated 'tactics' of shipment diversion, vessel transfer and 'swing' operations.

These saboteurs operate like they are above and outside the law. They are impervious to the anti-smuggling measures of the Bureau of Customs, the Coast Guard and other law enforcement agencies. And they sell and display their wares openly – at Binondo, Subic, Clark, Baguio, Cebu, Davao, General Santos, Cagayan de Oro, shopping malls, national highways or almost everywhere!

Like predators, smugglers prey on the very lives of our farmers, manufacturers and workers. They displace millions of Filipinos from their jobs since the unfair competition they thrive in wreaks havoc on the operations of domestic industry and farming. The nation's failure to curb this criminal activity is one of the leading reasons for the continued downward spiral of Philippine manufacturing and agricultural sectors and in the resulting massive joblessness and poverty in the country.

NOW is the time to act against this scourge!

- **ENACT a law treating smuggling as a heinous crime. File a new anti-smuggling bill and have it certified by the President as urgent.**
- **CHARGE customs officials abetting patently fraudulent importations as accomplices or conspirators in the crime of plunder.**
- **PENALIZE purchasers, peddlers and those who possess known smuggled items, similar to those violating the Anti-Fencing Law.**
- **OVERHAUL the ineffective anti-smuggling control mechanisms in place at Subic Bay, Clark and other economic and special zones and promote these zones as anti-smuggling zones.**
- **LIMIT the customs bonded warehouses (CBWs) to a number that can be effectively monitored and regularly audited (Less than 70 CBWs were audited last year out of almost 1,000 operating CBWs).**
- **CRAFT an effective Manual of Operations for the strict compliance by the remaining CBWs allowed to operate.**
- **SHORTEN the mandatory liquidation periods for all bonded warehouses from 9 months to 3 months.**
- **AMEND the Transaction Valuation Law and INSTITUTE correct and updated 'check prices' for imported articles to prevent under-invoicing by unscrupulous importers.**

Above all, give the campaign against smuggling a face, meaning haul to prison the big-time smugglers and their big-time coddlers in government!

Impassioned executive directives against smuggling are either ignored or met with feeble action and cosmetic measures by those mandated to stop smuggling. Enough is enough! Decisive and sustained solutions are urgent!

Stop the smuggling menace - NOW!

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MULTI-SECTORAL DIALOGUE

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on August 27, 2004, Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
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Comfort women in Pampanga seek medical help from gov't

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—At least 70 surviving victims of mass rape by Japanese soldiers on Monday sought medical help from the provincial government, saying they wanted to live more years to be able to seek justice from their ordeal.

The Malaya Lolas, the group by which the old women from Mapanique, Candaba, Pampanga, called themselves, sent seven of their leaders to meet with Gov. Mark Lapid.

They gave him a five-page report on their health conditions and medical needs. "Many of us are too weak to travel," Isabelita Vinuya, chair of the Malaya Lolas, told the governor.

The women—the oldest is 94, the youngest 67—reported being ill with diabetes, rheumatism, arthritis, hypertension, tuberculosis, cataract and asthma.

Four of them are paralyzed from the waist down. Of the more than 100 women who in 1986 broke their silence on the abuse, about 30 had already died without hearing any apology from Japan or getting reparation.

"Please help us add more years to our lives. We want to pursue justice. We want to die in peace," Vinuya, 73, said, speaking in Kapampangan.

In the meeting, they sang a song they composed on the tragedy that began to befell them on Nov. 23, 1944. At the crack of dawn on that day, Japanese soldiers under the command of Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita, raided, bombed, pillaged and burned Mapanique, 70 km east of here.

The women and their daughters were hauled off to the Bahay na Pula, a red-brick mansion owned by the Ilusorio family in San Ildefonso, Bulacan.

For weeks, they were raped without let-up by batches of war-weary soldiers. Several mothers and daughters were abused in the same room, their accounts showed.

In the song, they repeatedly emphasized this phrase: "*Winasak ang dangal* (They ruined our dignity)."

Lapid said the song not only revealed what these women went through but also "expressed a lot of pain." He instructed the provincial health officer to verify their health conditions and to extend medical help.

Their fight had been an uphill climb. Even as the Japanese recognized the claims of other comfort women in Asia, the Malaya Lolas lost their first case before the Japanese war tribunal. Last March, Vinuya said the Malaya Lolas filed a case for certiorari at the Supreme Court. They asked that rape, sexual slavery, torture and other forms of sexual violence on Filipino comfort women be declared as crimes against humanity and war crimes.

They also urged the Supreme Court to declare that the Philippines was not bound by the Treaty of Peace with Japan insofar as the waiver of the claims of the Filipino comfort women were concerned.

The Malaya Lolas called on the tribunal to order the foreign affairs secretary and the executive secretary of the Philippine government to espouse the claims of Filipino comfort women.

NPA hand seen in slay of rival reb head, daughter

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr. and Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—A top leader of a breakaway rebel group and his 16-year-old daughter were gunned down on Sunday in Makato town in Aklan.

Daniel Batoy, alias Mokong, Western Visayas commander of the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), and his daughter Perla Jane died of multiple gunshot wounds after three armed men on a motorcycle drove alongside the motorcycle Batoy was driving and fired at them.

Carapali Lualhati, RPA national commander, condemned the killing and pointed to their rival rebel faction—the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army—as their main suspect.

He said RPA-ABB leaders, including Batoy, were placed on the CPP-NPA's order of battle following their split from the mainstream group in 1992 due to ideological differences.

"We have activated our intelligence operatives to give a swift solution to the killing and a manhunt," said Lualhati.

Fire first

"We are not declaring war against the CPP-NPA but we are taking active defensive positions. This means we will not wait to be liquidated, if there is a threat to us we will fire first," he added.

Batoy, 45, and his daughter were on board a motorcycle on their way to his hometown in Ibajay at about 4:30 p.m. when they were attacked in Barangay Tina in Makato, 10 km from Kalibo town.

Supt. Odelardo Magayanes, Aklan police director, said the killers probably followed Batoy from Kalibo where he has a house and after he bought grocery items.

Police found spent shells for 9 mm and .45 cal. pistols from the scene of the ambush.

Batoy's gun was missing and believed to have been taken by his killers, said Magayanes.

Batoy was among the leaders of the "Rejectionist" bloc on Panay Island, who opposed the "rectification campaign" launched by the CPP-NPA in 1992.

After RPA-ABB signed a peace pact with the government in December 2000, Batoy became a member of the technical working committee of the panels of the government and the Rebolusyonaryong Partido ng Manggagawa-Pilipinas (RPM-P), the political wing of the RPA-ABB.

He oversaw the implementation of the peace accord in the region, said Magayanes.

Magayanes said Batoy was likely killed by his former comrades.

"He probably earned the ire of the NPA because he has been cooperating with the government and helped in running after the (NPA)," he told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

As of 2:30 p.m. yesterday, the NPA had not issued any statement owning up the killing.

But Lualhati warned that there would be "consequences" once they had proof that the CPP-NPA killed Batoy.

2 docs sued for graft over 'ghost' medicines

SAN FERNANDO CITY—Sometime in June 2002, a delivery man arrived at the Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center (ITRMC) aboard a car loaded with P1.3-million worth of assorted medicines that the hospital bought from a Dagupan City-based pharmaceutical company.

Several months later, in October 2002, the same delivery man came to the hospital with some P110,000-worth of medicines that ITRMC bought from the same company.

But none of the medicines reached the ITRMC supply section. In both instances, on instruction of a top ITRMC official, the medicines were delivered to a cock farm here owned by another ITRMC official.

In a resolution last month, Ismaela Boco, graft investigator of the Office of the Ombudsman, said Dr. Gilbert de Leon, former ITRMC chief, and Dr. Alexander Alviar, ITRMC medical training officer, used the name of the hospital to buy the medicines at cheaper prices and resell them for profit.

Boco said the ITRMC officials caused injury to the hospital and to the government.

As a result of the scam, Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit removed De Leon as ITRMC hospital chief last year and replaced him with Dr. Eduardo Janairo, DOH regional director, who briefly assumed the position.

Alviar was removed as medical training officer and assigned to another department at the ITRMC.

De Leon and Alviar were suspended for 90 days starting on March 9. Only Alviar reported for work last week.

The INQUIRER tried to reach De Leon for comment on the Ombudsman's decision to charge him with graft, but an ITRMC staff member said he has removed "all his things" from the ITRMC.

Alviar said he was innocent of the charges, adding that "these accusations were mere hearsay."

"There is no evidence against me," he told the INQUIRER.

Boco, who recommended the filing of charges against De Leon and Alviar, said records of the case's investigation said the officials conspired to commit the illegal transaction.

Boco said De Leon tried to pressure the DOH fact-finding committee by instructing Dr. Reynaldo Jacinto, committee chair, to clear Alviar.

Alviar used to be designated by De Leon as officer-in-charge whenever De Leon is out of town.

As a result of this pressure, Jacinto resigned from the committee.

Boco based her resolution on a complaint filed against De Leon and Alviar by Dr. Daisy Garcia and Dr. Jeisela Gaerlan, chair and assistant chair, of the ITRMC pediatrics department, and Mary Jane Nones, president of ITRMC employees' association; records of fact-finding hearings held last year by the DOH; and other documents of the case.

In their counter-affidavit, De Leon and Alviar said since they paid the medicines using their "private funds," they did not cause injury to the government. *Peter La. Julian, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

DAVAO STARS
Performers brighten up the streets of Davao City during the city's celebration of the Kadayawan Festival. A delegation from the Island Garden City of Samal do their bit at the Rizal Park in the city with native shields painted with stars.

Police defuse mortar bomb in Jolo market

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A bomb made from a 60mm mortar was recovered inside a public market in Sitio Alat, Barangay Salimbangon in Jolo, Sulu yesterday morning.

"It is a powerful bomb if exploded. We estimate that it could even reach a radius of 25 to 50 feet once exploded," Brig. Gen. Gabriel Habacon, Task Force Comet commander, said.

Habacon said the bomb could have been planted by members of the Urban Terrorist Group of the Abu Sayyaf "because the design is the same as that previously recovered sometime in June."

The explosive was detonated by the Explosives and Ordnance Disposal Unit (EOD) through "a disruption technology or the knuckle water pump technology."

"It is a technology where the bomb could be defused using water at a distance, so we don't need to let EOD members approach the bomb and defuse it," he said. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Vigilante killing puts sour note to Davao City fiesta

By Anthony Allada
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—A vigilante killing capped the week-long Kadayawan sa Dabaw festivities here Sunday night.

Joseph Lirog, 35, a former member of the Davao City Police Auxiliary Group (DCPAG), was shot dead in front of his shocked wife outside their house in Happy Times Beach, Ecoland, Barangay 76-A, at around 8:25 p.m. Sunday.

Lirog suffered multiple gunshot wounds in different parts of the body.

His brother Allan, 38, was also shot but escaped unhurt.

The suspect fled on board a waiting Honda dream motorcycle with two companions.

Responding policemen recovered six spent shells and a deformed slug of a .45 caliber pistol from the crime scene.

Lirog was the 64th person to have been killed by vigilante hit men this year alone.

This despite the arrest of a suspected vigilante hit man on Aug. 11 after he gunned down a convicted drug pusher outside the Davao City Overland Transport Terminal in Ecoland.

Head of village chiefs backs move to reset barangay polls

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The president of the National Liga ng mga Barangay maintained that the move to postpone barangay elections set for next year was not meant to extend their terms of office.

James Marty Lim, the national league president, said the officials merely wanted to reinstate their original terms of office.

"If we are asking for seven or ten years per term, then that is seeking an extension. But this is not an extension, this is a reinstatement. It used to be five (years), (then) they brought it down to three years," he said.

Lim denied insinuations that he merely wanted to extend his stay in office because he was already on his last term. He said he was considering retiring because he had already served 10 years as barangay captain.

Barangay captains are only allowed to have three consecutive terms.

Lim said in the 1970s, barangay captains used to have a six-year term. It was later reduced to five years and then three years in 1994.

Lim said that during the term of then President Fidel Ramos, it was increased to five years in 1997 but the lawmakers succeeded in postponing the election from 2000 to 2002.

He, however, said in 2002, lawmakers again passed another law, bringing their terms of office back to three years.

"It is sad that we were made like a yoyo, three years to five then to three years again. They should decide. I think there's something wrong with the politicians," Lim said.

Now that their terms of office is limited to three years, he said many barangay captains could not implement their projects.

Usually in their first year, village chiefs identify the projects they would implement. But in the second year, he added, they would already be busy campaigning for elections.

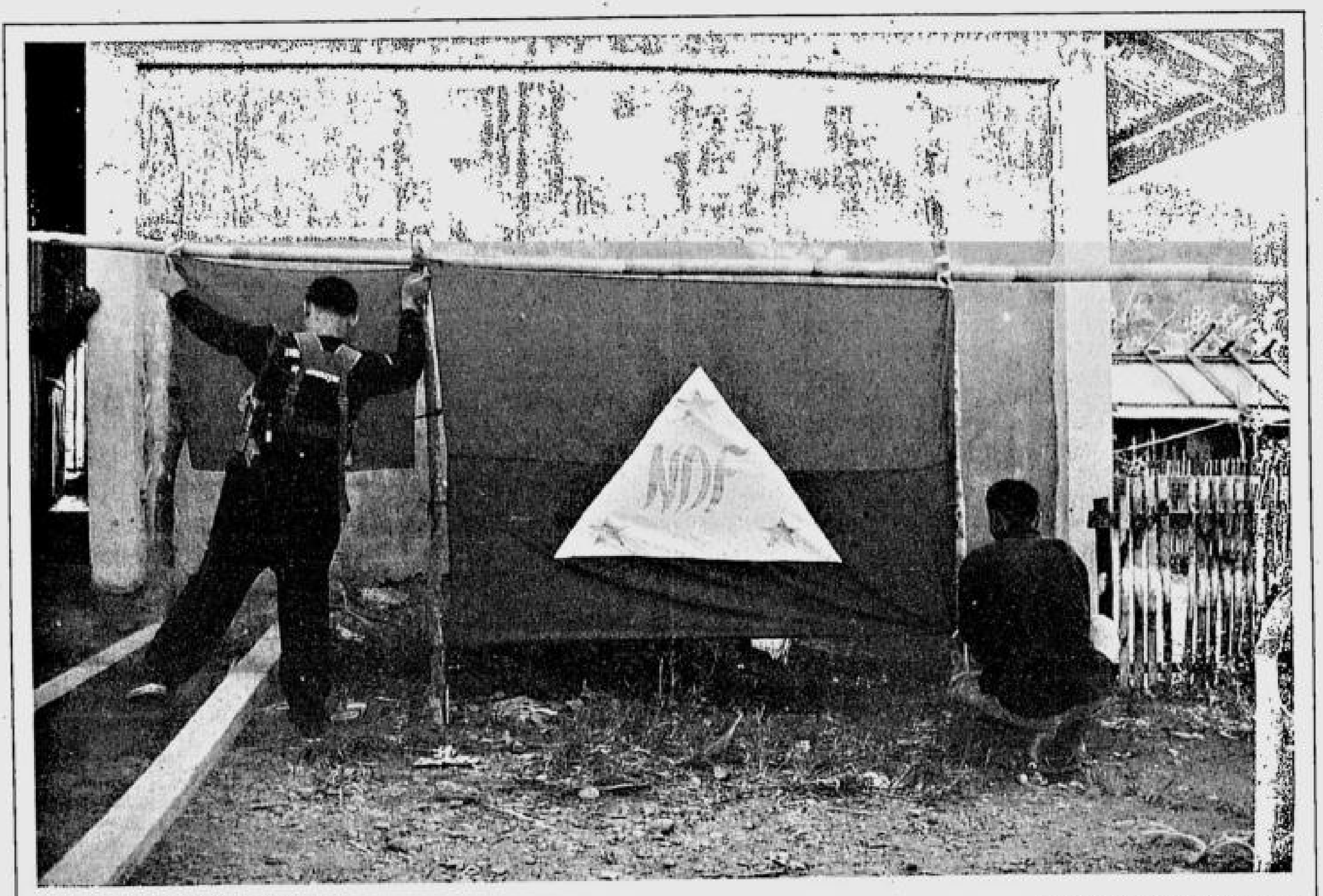
Lim said it was wrong to say that the five-year term was too long for bad and corrupt barangay officials.

Erring barangay officials must be removed. But he said less than 10 percent of the 40,000 barangay officials in the country committed mistakes during their terms.

What lawmakers must do is to strengthen the enforcement of the law and not to reduce their terms of office, he added.

"If they are bad, let us come up with a process to remove them. Let us not cure it by shortening the length of service because you will hurt a lot of people," he said.

Lim said the postponement would also save the government at least P2 billion. Congress only appropriates P1 billion for the barangay election although the Commission on Elections asked for P1.8 billion, he added.



JUAN ESCANDOR/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON

SHADOW GOVERNMENT
Communist guerrillas display a flag of the National Democratic Front on the wall of a concrete structure in a camp of the New People's Army somewhere in the mountains of Camarines Sur. The flag was displayed shortly before the release of two soldiers held captive as prisoners of war by the NPA.

Coco farmers, traders in Negros join hands for high-quality copra

By Romy G. Amarado
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY — Coconut farmers and copra traders in Negros Oriental have vowed to work together to prevent the loss of the country's biggest foreign copra market—the European Union (EU).

Brendan Trasmonte, Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) provincial chair, said the two stakeholders passed a joint resolution early this month after the EU demanded higher-quality copra.

According to the resolution, copra traders or buyers who do not have dryers will no longer buy fresh coconut meat. The traders also promised to reject copra of poor quality.

The resolution also sought the creation of the Provincial Copra Quality Improvement Program Management Committee that will monitor the quality of copra produced locally and formulate policies and plans on the implementation of the PCA's copra quality improvement program, among others.

It also pushed for an intensive information drive on the EU directive that was adopted by most of its members last year, which demanded a higher quality of copra.

Trasmonte said the directive stipulated that the acceptable content of aflatoxin in copra should not be more than 20 parts per billion.

Aflatoxin is a toxic compound produced by a mold or fungus in agricultural crops that have not been carefully stored. It can cause hepatitis and liver cancer.

In a recent study conducted by the PCA, the level of aflatoxin contamination in copra produced in the country went as high as 103 parts per billion in Central Mindanao.

In Central Visayas, where Negros Oriental belongs, the aflatoxin contamination was 100 parts per billion.

Trasmonte said the coconut industry, one of the country's major dollar earners, will be in serious trouble if the quality of copra from the Philippines does not conform to standards set by the EU.

"This is a serious problem and could put the coconut industry in the country in jeopardy. That is why stakeholders of the industry should work together to upgrade the quality of copra," Trasmonte said.

More than 50,000 people in Negros Oriental are directly dependent on the coconut industry. There are 50,460 hectares of land in the province planted with coconut trees.

Trasmonte said improper techniques and procedures in the processing of copra, from harvesting to drying, as well as the improper handling of coconut meat were the main culprits in the poor quality of the product.

Gov't urged to stop importing rice; P5.3B in losses incurred

TARLAC CITY—A member of the provincial board has asked the national government to stop importing rice and instead redirect its resources toward subsidizing agricultural inputs so that farmers can produce more of the staple food at competitive prices.

Board member Amado Go said the P5.3-billion in losses that the government incurred from importing rice and selling it to consumers at subsidized costs, to keep prices down during the lean months, were counterproductive. The importation also deprives farm workers of much needed jobs, he said.

In a privilege speech that also challenged the rest of the provincial board to make a stand on the issue of importation through a resolution, Go said the national government was indirectly persecuting the farmer through its rice importation.

"The solution to augment the country's rice supply is production, not importation," he said.

Import costs

Go said that based on data from the National Food Authority, the landed costs of rice importation from Vietnam and Thailand were P19.654 and P20.618 per kilo.

The NFA distributes the imported rice to members at P15 per kilo and the end-consumers buy it at P16 per kilo. Thus, the government loses P5.61 per kilo or P5.3 billion for the 945,000 tons of rice it has imported.

This P5.3 billion should have been redirected to support farmers' productivity, Go said. He said farm inputs should be subsidized so that farmers would be encouraged to produce more and become competitive, too.

Go said the importation had also deprived farm and rice mill workers of jobs in these areas. Converted into bags, the 945,00 tons of rice are equal to 8,900,000 bags (20 bags per ton), he said.

Job loss

In the rice milling sector, the average labor cost per bag of rice from palay drying to milling to rice bagging is P15.

Thus, the volume of work lost due to importation is worth P283.5 million. Go said this could have been a big help to the many workers who rely on rice production for their source of income.

Go's proposal was referred to the appropriate committee for further study following another board member's comment that they (the provincial board) "cannot tell the national government what to do."

Another board member also suggested that the proposal should tone down the importation aspect and instead highlight the request for farmers' subsidy. *Jo Clemente, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

More suicidal thoughts in Cordillera, says study

BAGUIO CITY—Youths in the Cordillera have topped the list of the country's young smokers in the third Young Adult Fertility and Sexuality Survey (YAFS), and that should have been bad enough.

But the Commission on Population said these youths have also contemplated far speedier forms of dying than smoke-related cancer.

That's because the Cordillera also topped questionnaires that drew out suicidal thoughts from 200,000 teenage respondents of the YAFS conducted by the University of the Philippines Population Institute, said Anne Calimquim, commission spokesperson.

The commission presented the survey results to the Cordillera Regional Peace and Order Council (RPOC) last week for evaluation because the results indicated that the region's youths were prone to "high-risk" activities.

The agency advised the council that the youths' behavioral shift was reflected by the increase in sexual activity, their vices and the latest suicide poll.

Lety Miana, a counselor and deputy director of Ebgan Inc., a gender and child rights group, said the survey results were baffling.

She said there were no historical or sociological tracks revealing a high suicide trend in the Cordillera.

"Most women's studies are cautious about making conclusions regarding adolescent statistics because they rarely reflect true behavior," she said.

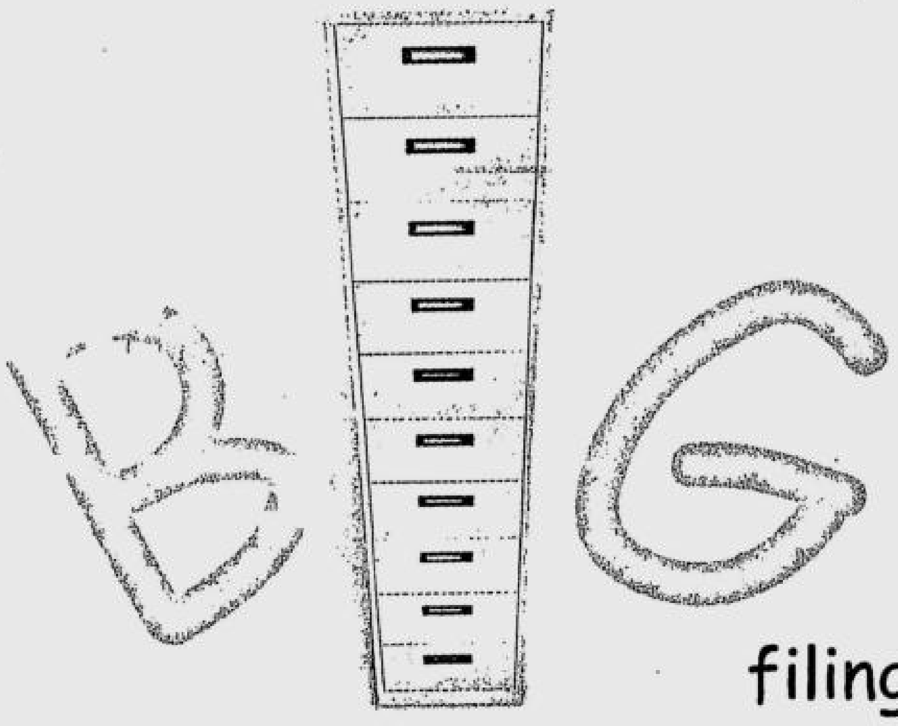
In 2001, the Department of Health reported a high incidence of suicide among young farmers in the vegetable farms of Benguet. The trend has not yet been validated.

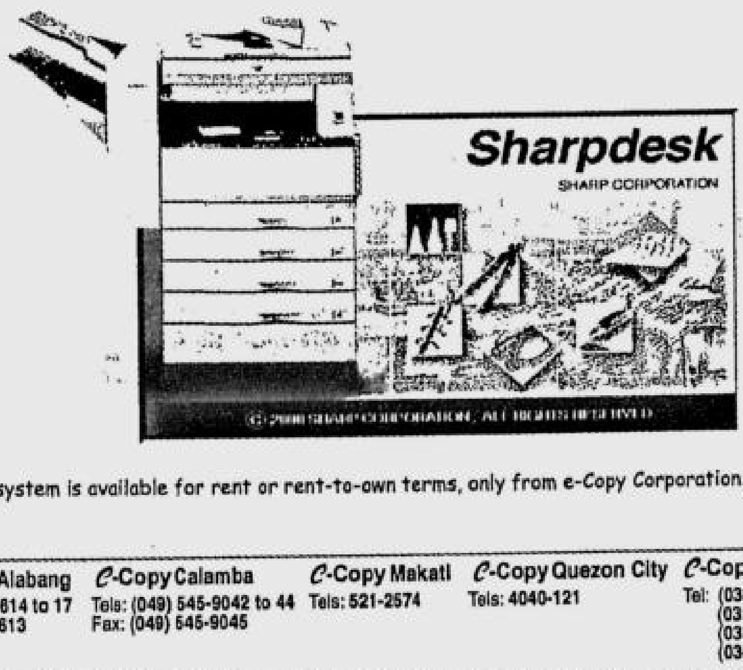
Dr. Corazon Raymundo, team leader of the YAFS, relayed the Cordillera results to the Commission on Population in November last year.

The commission said Cordillera respondents who admitted having suicidal thoughts exceeded the national average of 13 percent by scoring 24 percent in the survey that covered 2002.

Youths in Metro Manila scored 15 percent while those in Northern Mindanao scored 20 percent, according to Raymundo's report.

Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau





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Gender . . .

From page A1

dent Macapagal-Arroyo's ongoing Cabinet rearrangement is distressing party-list Rep. Risa Hontiveros of Akbayan.

Is the President creating an all-male Cabinet, Hontiveros demanded to know yesterday.

"It is very ironic that President Arroyo, the Philippines' second woman president, is not exercising gender sensitivity in her choices," the lawmaker said.

True enough, as of yesterday, the top members of Ms Arroyo's official family consisted of men, except for Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas and Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman. That's three out of more than 20 major portfolios.

Hontiveros sounded the alarm, saying the President should beware of a "patriarchal, patronage and personality-oriented" type of governance.

She was "disappointed," she said, to say the least.

As she saw it, it was Ms Arroyo's prerogative to pick her own people, but "observing gender balance" couldn't possibly hurt.

It was "unfortunate" enough, she stressed, that the appointments were being widely regarded as a division of spoils.

This "horse trading" further reduced the chances of involving competent women in government, and therefore threatened the integrity of the new administration, she said.

Worse, this could be depriving Filipinos of the most efficient public service possible, Hontiveros said.

The lawmaker also lamented that "gender stereotypes still defined Cabinet positions." To illustrate, only men have been traditionally given posts relative to security matters. Clearly, she said, the presumption was that this area of concern was a male enclave.

She wondered: "Why can't we have a woman chief for the Philippine National Police or a woman secretary of national defense?"

Hontiveros said she and two other Akbayan representatives, Loretta Ann Rosales and Mayong Aguja, were set to file a bill that would allocate "at least 30 percent" of government positions to women.

Fair enough. They who hold up half of the sky should have a say in what goes on beneath it. Otherwise, what's the point?

Aglipay term extended 6 months

From page A1

was extending Aglipay's term so that he could serve as PNP director general for "at least six months."

Aglipay, originally due to retire on Sept. 13, promptly made clear what he wanted to do with the PNP—which Ms Arroyo said was still perceived by the people as "one of the five most corrupt institutions in our country."

"Let this serve as a warning to those who defy the call for discipline," the 55-year-old Aglipay said in his speech. "We will set up a training and reformatory school in Corregidor or in some secluded area in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao."

Days of 'kotong cops' over?

"*Ang mga pulis na tinatawag na kotong o hulidap ay aarestuhin agad at ipakukulong. Mga* scalawags, *hindi namin kayo tatantanan* (Those policemen engaged in extortion will be arrested immediately and jailed. We will not relent on these scalawags)," he declared.

But that was not enough.

"Don't smoke, unbutton your shirt or swagger like a street toughie when in uniform," Aglipay said, adding that police should address people as "ma'am" or "sir" and greet people on the street courteously.

To impose all these on the 115,000-strong PNP, Aglipay said he would lead by example.

"When I say I would trim my waist, I would do it," he said. "That means I would join you in our athletic day."

No more lavish meals

In line with the government's austerity program due to the huge budget deficit, Aglipay said police officials would be served only crackers, coffee or water, and cheap meals during conferences.

"I also request that you should refrain from giving me gifts," he said. "Your best gift would be your good service to our people."

Aglipay said he would not hesitate to sack regional and provincial directors, chiefs of police and station commanders who would not implement his CARE (Courtesy, Action, Results, Example) program.

Each officer, he said, would be judged on how well he performed against criminals, including rogue cops, and how well he organized communities to help in crime prevention.

Aglipay ordered all police stations to submit an inventory of all unsolved cases in their areas of responsibility in the last three years.

5 solved cases a month

Making the order even much harder, he ordered each station to "neutralize" five out of 100 crime syndicates monthly, arrest all wanted persons, and solve at least five of every 100 unsolved cases each month.

Aglipay got his own separate marching orders from Ms Arroyo: Stamp out the culture of corruption in the PNP; stop the scourge of illegal drugs, and wipe out terrorism.

She ordered Aglipay to focus on drug prevention by mobilizing out-of-school youth into the government's "emergency employment program."

The program will tap "*kanto* boys" (street youth) to help in the repair of buildings and other structures in the neighborhood.

PNP shake-up

Within minutes of assuming office, Aglipay implemented a top-level revamp.

He assigned Director Avelino Razon Jr. to the all-important position of National Capital Region Police Office chief, replacing Director Ricardo de Leon, who will move over to the Philippine Center for Transnational Crime.

The center's erstwhile chief, Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, is now the PNP's No. 3 man as deputy chief for operations.

Velasco took over the post of Deputy Director General Virtus Gil, who assumed Aglipay's vacated position as deputy chief for administration, the police force's No. 2 spot.

De Leon, Velasco and Gil were Aglipay's classmates (mistahs) in Philippine Military Academy Class 1971.

Replacing Razon as director for operations was Chief Supt. Isidro Lapena, outgoing Southern Mindanao police office director.

Aglipay, who automatically assumed the four-star rank of director general, also recommended the promotion of De Leon and Director Enrique Galang Jr. to the rank of deputy director general (three-star).

Chief Superintendents Vidal Querol, Quirino de la Torre, Simeon Dizon, Oscar Calderon and Arturo Lomibao were also recommended for promotion to the rank of director (two-star).

Ms Arroyo said she had decided to extend Aglipay's term to enable him to get his plans off the ground, institutionalize gains in law enforcement and have a strong start in professionalizing the force.

She praised Aglipay's predecessor, Hermogenes Ebdane Jr., now her national security adviser, whom she said had the "most extensive personal intelligence network" in the country that she was able to use in combating terrorism and dealing with Moro rebels.

Ms Arroyo quipped that Aglipay should thank Ebdane for retiring from the PNP early because this paved the way for his own promotion.

Indigenous world games planned

From page A1

to corporate demands.

Corpuz also noted this in her introduction to the Tebtebba book, "Reclaiming Balance: Indigenous Peoples, Conflict Resolution and Sustainable Development," launched this month. Fortunately, she said, some groups worldwide had begun to see the light.

Forging ties

In Canada, Kree Indians were drawing communities to a "Kree Olympics," and have invited their Philippine counterparts to link up and forge ties via their own ancient games, Corpuz said.

She explained that the Kree Indians sought to promote values developed by various world tribes, having noted that these values were manifested in ritual sport, or gamesmanship trials during agricultural cycle festivals.

But local anthropologists have yet to catalogue Philippine indigenous sports, Corpuz said.

Nicolas Cawed, an advocate of indigenous games, said Bontoc and Kankanaey athletes participate in ritual-based *chepap* (wrestling) or *sangkor* (arm-wrestling) after every harvest to contain potential violence among warring families or even feuding couples.

Cawed said he frequently oversaw versions of these ritual games during Baguio holidays, but that few recognized that the games had long been instrumental in curbing wars among Cordillera tribes.

He said ancient Igorots had a whole system of conflict management which the International Development Research Center (IDRC) describes on its website as "non-adversarial."

The IRDC points out that the system "is geared to preventing, reducing or resolving conflicts [because] peace is an important goal."

ARMS STRUGGLE in the northern highlands.

EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

During the "Imbayah" agricultural thanksgiving festival last year, guests who witnessed a modern demonstration of the "*uggub*" were briefed about the code that Ifugao warriors of old followed to impose communal justice.

Bella Takinan, a former Ifugao vice governor, described the ancient proceedings: Feuding landowners were made to stand at the opposite edges of the contested field. Each one was then allowed to hurl spears at each other in a "match monitored by the Ifugao heaven." A direct hit meant that the ancestral gods had blessed the victor with proprietary rights over the estate.

In last year's festival, "warriors" targeted rivals with darts made of tiger grass.

Other Cordillera games have roots either in combat training or ritual sacrifice.

Cawed said wrestling was still a favorite, just like "*guyyudan*," or tug-of war, as well as "*kadtil*," an ancient martial art that has traces of taekwondo and which the Bontocs practice.

Eufronio Pungayan, an Ibaloi linguist and historian, said Benguet tribes also played a combat sport called "*paxid tan abang*."

Pungayan said the Ibaloi term translated literally to sweep (*paxid*) and wrestle (*abang*). He noted that the "unique combination" used to be employed against invading tribes.

Tommy Hafalla, a Baguio-based photographer and artist who has been documenting Igorot culture, cited an exercise traced back to worship rites.

He keeps photographs of "*vavalocnit*," a "strange" game played in Central Bontoc after communal rice-planting. The game requires all men to form teams and position themselves across one another at the closest river or creek. Each group tries to hit members of the opposing team with heavy rocks. Causing the opponents to bleed into the water is considered beneficial because it augurs a fruitful harvest three months later, Hafalla said.

All things considered, he concluded that tribal games delivered "an approximation of fairness" to the ancient communities. *With a report from Edgardo Espiritu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Aides sans raincoats marked absent

By Margaux C. Ortiz

METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday warned traffic enforcers to bring their raincoats at all times, or they would be marked absent from work.

"Now there would be no excuse for our enforcers to leave their posts when it's raining," Fernando said, following Pascual Laboratories' donation of 1,000 raincoats for the MMDA traffic aides.

Fernando stressed that the raincoats should be for official use only.

"I'm warning the enforcers not to lend their raincoats because these are part of their uniform," he said, adding that the rainwear could be used for unscrupulous activities if not used for official business.

The MMDA chair also said that enforcers who would not be issued raincoats could use their old ones.

The MMDA presently employs 2,000 traffic enforcers distributed along major thoroughfares and strategic areas in the metropolis.

Antipolo inmates to new jail soon

By Luige del Puerto

ANTIPOLO'S 598 inmates huddled in its crowded city jail are luckier than most.

In the next two months, they are looking at the prospect of moving to bigger cells and the benefits of a larger area where they can get some sun, unlike many who continue to languish in cramped, squalid quarters.

Mayor Angelito Gatlabayan said the bidding for the construction of the remaining 50 percent of the new Antipolo jail complex had been set this week. The project, which is supposed to be undertaken by the Interior Department, would cost P12 million.

"Some of the prisoners can already be transferred to the new facility by October," Gatlabayan said.

Congestion is a major problem in many of the country's prisons. Early this month, two inmates at the municipal jail in Cainta town nearby had died because of malnutrition problems aggravated by poor living conditions.

In many Metro Manila jails, inmates have to sleep on shifts because there is not enough room to lie down.

Antipolo jail warden Ignacio Panti yesterday asked Gatlabayan to speed up the construction of the three-story building in Barangay San Jose.

"The local officials are our only hope," he said, noting the paltry amount the national government traditionally sets aside for the country's jails.

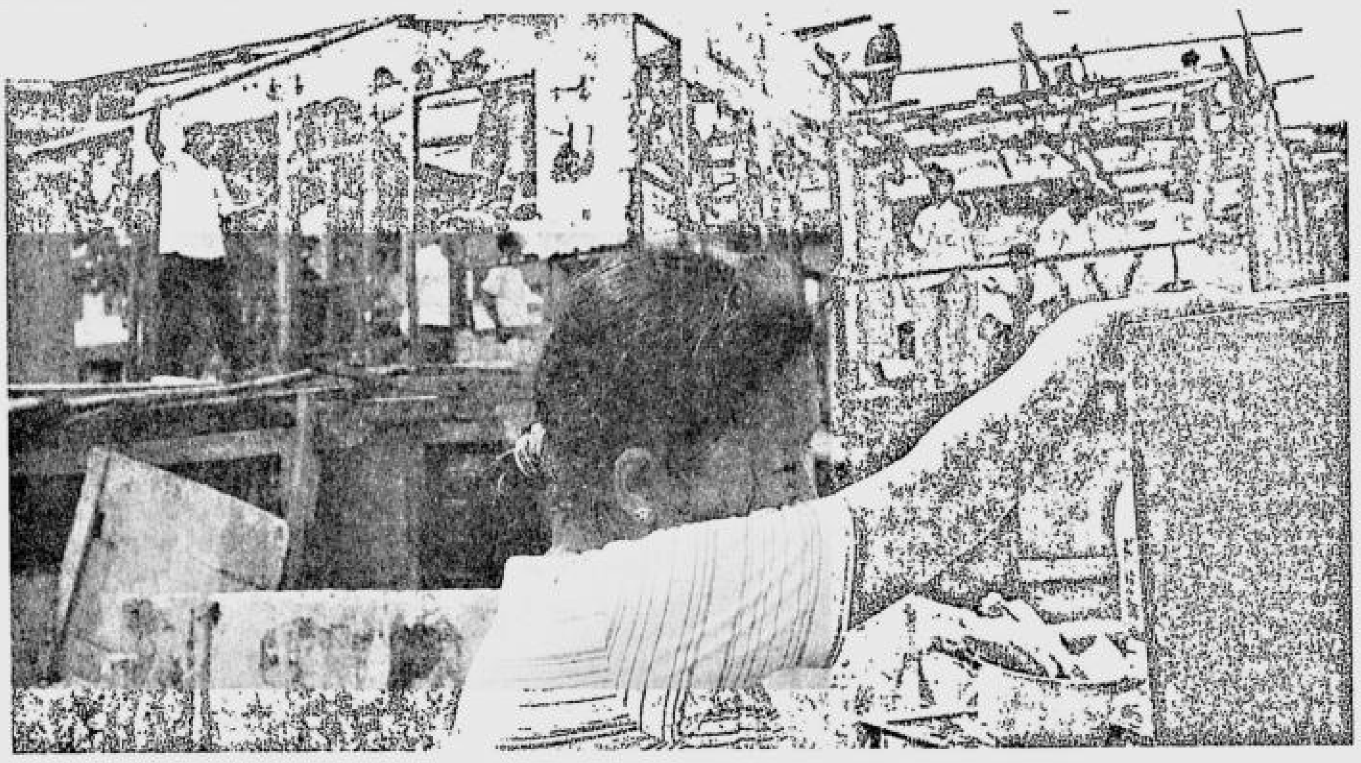
The warden said they already lost seven inmates to tuberculosis this year. Once inside the jail, it is only a matter of time before a patient's condition—especially those with TB—deteriorates, Panti added.

Ideally, the Antipolo jail should accommodate only 100 prisoners. It is now home to around 598.

Gatlabayan said work would first start on the basement and ground floor that would house the inmates.

The Bureau of Fire and the local police would occupy the other two floors.

There is also a plan to convert a five-hectare lot in Barangay Pinugay into a jail complex that would include a haven for juvenile offenders, he added.



MGUIAO PUNZALAN

NO PLACE TO GO
A woman weeps over her the loss of her home, one of many torn down yesterday near the Bureau of Immigration building in Intramuros, Manila, by a demolition crew from the Manila city engineer's office.

NCRPO has new chief

By Tina Santos

OUTGOING Director Ricardo de Leon today leaves the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO), but not without crowing about the agency's achievements during the first seven months of the year under his leadership.

De Leon, who will be replaced by National Police Director for Operations General Avelino Razon Jr., will head the Philippine Center for Transnational Crime.

The current number of street crime incidents in Metro Manila had gone down 48.15 percent from January to July compared to the same period last year, De Leon boasted, attributing the decrease in street crime incidents to intensified police operations, which include the setting up of checkpoints.

In the figures released by the NCRPO, there were only 3,138 incidents of street crimes for the period compared to last year's 6,053 incidents.

De Leon claimed that of the crimes reported, Metro Manila policemen solved a total of 3,095 out of 3,138 cases, or 97.23 percent.

Of the total crime volume, including high-profile crimes such as kidnap-for-ransom incidents, the NCRPO took pride in claiming that it had reduced crime incidence by 13.29 percent.

A total of 10,381 crime incidents were recorded in the metropolis, 9,833 or 94.72 percent of which were solved, De Leon said.

A second for flyover this month

By Luige del Puerto

A TEN-WHEEL truck fell on the Ortigas Avenue C-5 flyover on Sunday night in Pasig City, injuring two persons, including Reynaldo Damas of the Taguig police.

The truck became the second vehicle to land on the center isle, cross the other lane, and hurt other motorists on the flyover this month.

On Aug. 7, a Toyota Land Cruiser driven by a Filipino-American student, went over the center isle and rammed into the van of Undersecretary Nestor Ponce Jr.

The Malacañang official died, while his wife was injured.

Probe findings on Binondo building collapse out soon; charges readied

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE FACT-FINDING committee tasked to look into the collapse of the Sai Building in Binondo last July 23 is ready to release its findings this week, Manila Mayor Joselito Atienza said yesterday as he directed the filing of administrative and criminal charges against the owner and those involved in the construction of the structure.

Those who would be charged for negligence are owner Rajude Mansukhani; architect Albert Chua; building contractor, architect Edward Sy, who was named Mansukhani's official representative according to records; Engineer Teofilo Go, responsible for the building's design; and AGVID Construction Company, the private contractor which undertook pile driving operations for Sai's foundation.

Engineers Lirma Fajardo, who evaluated the building plans and passed it for compliance with construction requirements; Rolito Samson, field inspector during the pile driving and the first stage of construction; and Wilson Habana, who monitored the construction, are likely to face administrative and criminal charges, Atienza said.

Edgardo Soriano, head of the Manila Building Office Enforcement Division, could also face criminal and administrative charges for signing the building's Certificate of Final Inspection and the Certificate of Occupancy.

"Nobody will get off lightly to make sure this does not happen again," said Atienza.

Also liable for the building's fall are officials of Manila's Building Office, who issued permits for the building's construction and monitored work on the building.

The fact-finding committee found the building's design, especially for its pile foundation, faulty, among others.

The committee, is headed by Secretary to the Mayor Emmanuel Sison, with City Administrator Dino Nable as vice-chair, and City Engineer Armand Andres and professional civil engineers as members.

METROBRIEFS

'I will return'

THE WIFE of slain Japanese businessman Masashi Matsuura has promised to return to the country after his burial and coordinate with the authorities in the investigation of his death to show that she had nothing to do with it. Alicia Matsuura relayed her promise through her lawyer, Leomo Lanzares. *Leila B. Salaverria*

New book on PUP

A BOOK on the Polytechnic University of the Philippines titled "Isang Pagdiriwang ng Sandaang taong Sosyo-Politikal na Pakikibaka ng PUP (Mga Piraso ng Kasaysayan at Edukasyon)" will be launched on Oct. 1, in time for the University's centennial celebration. The book, written by Prof. Ave Perez Jacob, a multi-awarded bilingual writer and novelist, and a member of the PUP's faculty, depicts the institution's humble beginnings, finding shelter in other institutions like the then Philippine Normal School and the Philippine School of Arts and Trades. As a pioneering vocational school, the 100-year-old institution produced the first batches of stenographers, bookkeepers and accountants who contributed to the running of the fledging government bureaucracy as well as pioneer business houses.

Renovated Paco library

MANILA Mayor Lito Atienza inaugurated recently the newly redeveloped Manila-Sacramento Friendship Library located at Canonigo corner Zamora St. in Paco. The library also has an Internet café, a day care center and a playhouse, apart from an extensive book collection.

GMA should recall Durano's appointment

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

IT WON'T be long now when Muslim rebels will decide that making love instead of war is the better option. It won't be long now when communist rebels come down from the hills.

Let's keep our fingers crossed that the peace talks the government is conducting with the Muslim secessionists and the communist rebels will end on a very happy note.

And when that happens, peace will reign again in our land. And with peace, economic progress.

That's why it's important that the Arroyo administration make tourism its flagship industry. Like the millions of Filipino workers abroad that bring in dollars, tourism will become another big dollar earner.

And why not? Filipinos are tourist-friendly; the natives speak English, the international language; we have rustic and exotic places that Westerners like; we have postcard-pretty scenery still unspoiled by civilization. And a lot more.

That's why we need a tourism czar who's knowledgeable and experienced in promoting the country throughout the world.

Former tourism secretary and now Sen. Richard Gordon is right: we can't afford to have a tourism secretary who will undergo on-the-job training at the Department of Tourism.

Cebu Rep. Ace Joseph Durano can't fit the bill of the tourism czar. Aside from being very young (only in his early 30s), Durano can't probably distinguish between a tourist and a resident alien.

"We must remind the government that tourism is the fastest way to get our people jobs and for the country to earn more dollars that will enable the Central Bank to pay the country's debts," Gordon said.

President Arroyo should recall Durano's appointment as tourism secretary and place him in another post. She should keep the country's aggressive tourism promotion beyond petty politics.

The Cebuanos, who gave her a huge margin over her closest rival in the last elections, would understand. They would even appreciate her when more tourists come to Cebu, which is right now a favorite tourist destination.

* * *

An American soldier who took part in a war exercise in Mindanao told me that if peace finally settles down in Mindanao, the best place for a tourist to go to is Basilan.

He described Basilan as a paradise where the "blue mountains meet the sky and the sea is full of fish and where Muslims and Christians live in harmony and are very friendly toward foreigners." Or words to that effect.

Of course, GI Joe was not referring to the Abu Sayyaf.

That was not the first time Basilan was described to me that way by a foreigner. I've been to Basilan several times—first as a young man in the late 1960s when my Dad was still in the military and then as a TV show host—and I understand the enthusiasm foreigners, as well as local tourists, have for the island province.

If Basilan could be rid of the Abu Sayyaf, it would become one of the country's major tourist destinations because of its pristine beauty and its people's accommodating attitude toward foreigners. Both Muslims and Christians live in harmony in the island province.

Basilan would even surpass the beauty of Boracay.

The tourism department would do well to make big preparations for promoting Basilan in the event peace reigns in Mindanao again.

LASALLIAN SCHOLARUM AWARD WINNERS
Four winners of De La Salle University-Manila's (DLSU-M) newly launched journalism competition on youth and education were announced on Aug. 6 at the Peninsula Hotel Manila, Makati. From left are GMA Reporter Carlo Loernzo, DLSU-M Executive Vice President Dr. Carmelita Quebengco, GMA/I-witness Production Coordinator Ivy Magparangalan receiving the award for Kara David (Outstanding Feature Story for TV), GMA/I-witness reporter Howie Severino, The Philippine Star photojournalist Ernie Peñaredondo (Outstanding Photo), GMA/I-witness reporter Raffy Tima, Businessworld reporter Judy Gulane (Outstanding Feature Story on DLSU-M), Manila Bulletin reporter Mylene Ching (Outstanding Feature Story for Print), Philippine Daily Inquirer Chairman Marixi Prieto, and DLSU System President Brother Armin Luistro, FSC. The winners received cash prizes and trophies designed by noted glass sculptor Ramon Orlina.

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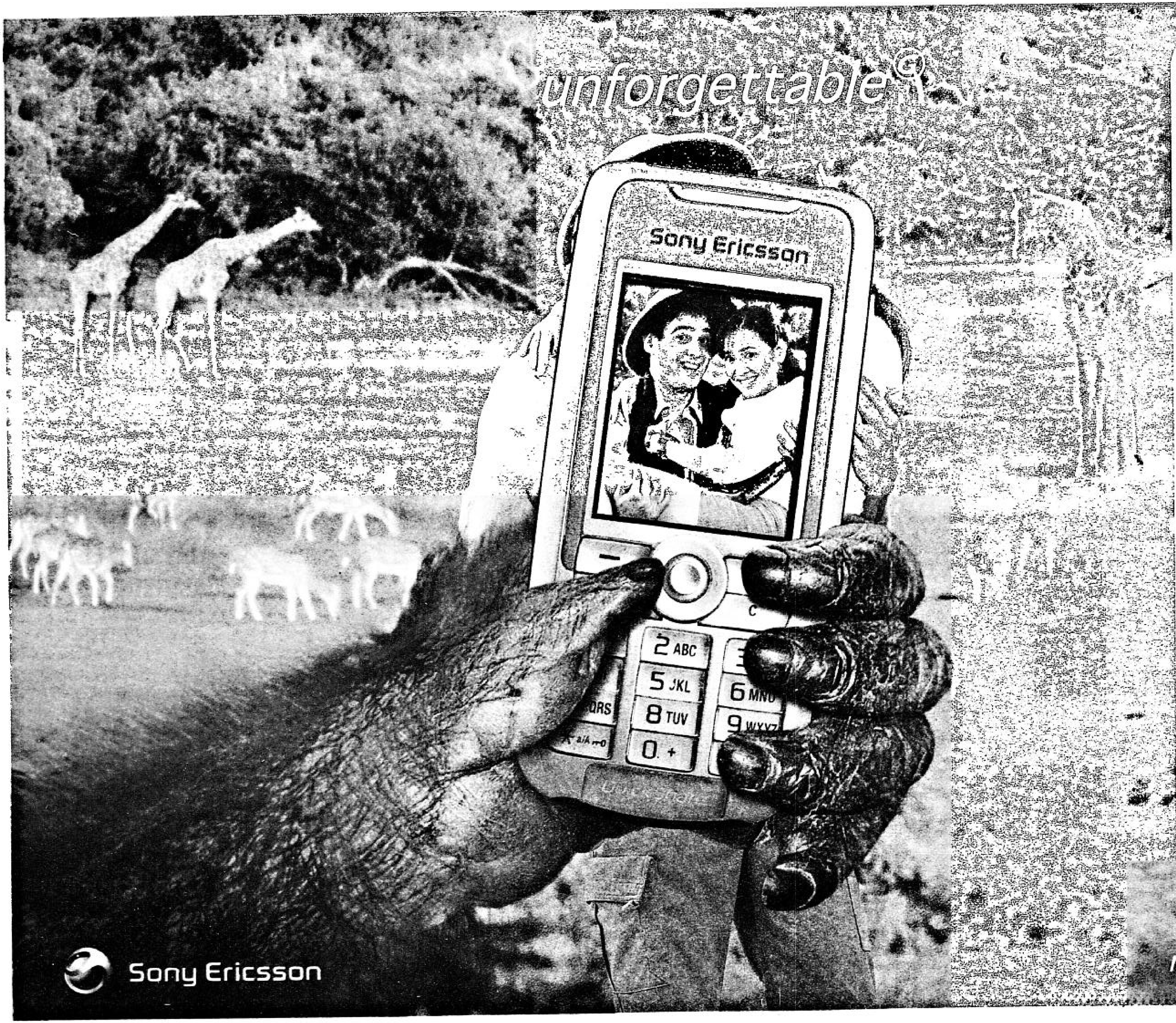

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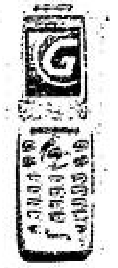

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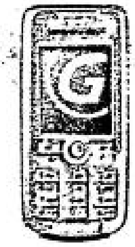

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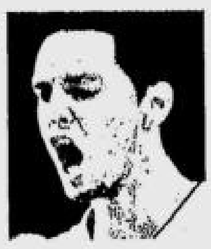

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Pinoy jins go for gold

Medal hope now rests on shoulders of Rivero, Geisler, Go

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.
News Editor

ATHENS—With the demise of the medal hopes of the boxers, the awesome task of winning the Philippines' first ever Olympic gold medal—or any medal at all—has fallen on the shoulders of the three Filipinos in taekwondo in the 28th Olympic Games.

But the enormity of the task did not seem to daunt Mary Antoinette Rivero, Tshomlee Go and Donald Geisler III as they went about their daily practice Sunday at the Olympic Village under the watchful eyes of head coach Jesus "Jobet" Morales III.

The team went through their daily routine of honing up their techniques and limbering up with kicking exercises.

"Nothing heavy," said Morales.

Go and Rivero will have their own private cheering squad when they see action at the Faliro Sports Pavilion. Members of their respective families were to arrive Monday to root for them.

Arriving were Rivero's parents and two brothers and Go's mother and brother Jefferthom, who is also a member of the taekwondo national pool.

Go will see action first, competing in the men's under-58 kg division on Thursday while Geisler and Rivero go to battle on Saturday in the men's under-80 and women's under-67, respectively.

"Now, more than ever, is our best chance to win a gold," said Geisler.

No one is in a better position to make such an assertion and has a better chance of winning that elusive gold than Geisler, the 25-year-old veteran of the Sydney Olympics and six World Cup competitions.

Only remnant

The only remnant of the four-man Philippine team that competed in Sydney in 2000, Geisler says he is better prepared now than he was four years ago. He and the two other Filipino taekwondo jins underwent a two-and-a-half month training in South Korea, birthplace of the sport, before coming to Athens.

The experience has made Geisler one of the darkhorses in his division where he considers entries from the United States, Iran and Turkey as his toughest rivals.

Olympic first-timers Go and Rivero may be younger and less experienced, but they are no less determined to win their respective divisions.

MEDAL HOPEFULS: Donald Geisler III, Marie Antoinette Rivero, Tsohmlee Go. PDI PHOTO / JUN ENGRACIA

"Young and determined" was how the 16-year-old Rivero described herself in the biography found in the Olympic information service.

"They may underestimate me because I'm young. But I'm equally determined as the others. My strength is actually my determination to win," said Rivero, who is living out the Olympic dream she nurtured most of her young life.

Her other strength is her lower body. The team's Korean coach, Kim Tae Hyung, has turned her legs into an asset in a sport that puts premium on leg action.

The 5-foot-8 youngster, winner of the gold in last year's Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam, will be fighting in the women's under-67 kg class where one of the dreaded Koreans, Sun Hwang Kyung, is entered.

She lost a close decision to the Korean in the final of the Asian junior championship in Korea.

"She's here and she's going to be tough," Rivero said. Otherwise, she considers her medal chances in Athens as "OK *lang*."

Tough schedule

Due to her tough taekwondo schedule, which included traveling to competitions, Rivero had to enroll in the home study program of Angelicum College, where she is now on her third year in high school. The program affords students like her to study at their own pace through modules they have to study while they're away from school.

Go will have the most difficult task of all. He will be up against the two-time world champion from Taiwan and the defending Olympic champion, a Greek.

It will be tough fighting Michalis Mouroutsos, the hometown hero, but Morales says Go can beat him. "*Kaya yun* (He can do it)," said Morales.

Go, 23, was the first Filipino to qualify for the Athens Games, having made it in December in Paris by winning in the world taekwondo qualifying tournament. He won the bronze in the Asian Games in Busan two years ago and was the silver medalist in the 2001 world championship in Vietnam and the Asian championship in 2000 in Hong Kong.

Key to victory

He said the key to victory, as far as he is concerned, is to stay focused and calm and to learn the opponent's moves before "I make my moves."

Geisler and Rivero took the last bus to Athens, earning their tickets in the Asian regional qualifying tournament in Bangkok last February.

In that tournament, they made it to the final and, having clinched their Olympic berths, opted not to fight for the gold to prevent injuries and avoid the scouts of foreign teams who were already videotaping their fights. They threw in the towel at the start of their final bouts and settled for the silver.

Athens 2004 may be the best and final chance for Geisler to win an Olympic medal. Having suffered a heartbreaking first-round loss in Sydney, he has vowed to prepare and do better this time.

But he has to hurdle favorites like Steven Lopez of the United States, who won the gold in a lighter class in Sydney and has won the world championships in two heavier categories since then.

In Athens, Lopez has moved up to a heavier class that puts him in the same division as Geisler.

He said he's more determined now and has promised "to give it my best shot."

Bigger tragedy for failed RP boxing team

By Recah Trinidad

COMMENTARY

ATHENS—The biggest tragedy for the national contingent here is not that dismal showing of the RP boxing team alone.

It's the blank admission by top medal hope Harry Tañamor that he did not know why he failed to score and lost.

That's as sordid and fatal as being unaware of a raging fire that's all set to consume one's living room.

For the record, South Korea's Hong Moo Won scored the sharper, clearer punches in the bout against Tañamor which, based on the 42-25 final count, should be ranked a mismatch.

Tañamor, retreating mostly in the first two rounds, did try to shoot it out toe-to-toe in the final two rounds at the Peristeri Olympic Boxing Hall on Saturday.

The fight, however, was never close.

Tañamor may have indeed felt his blows were landing.

Unfortunately, majority of these punches were loose, looping connections, the sort that normally don't merit points in a discipline that puts premium on skill and pinpoint punching.

Also, the blows Tañamor claimed he had scored on the belly were likewise not of the direct, unhampered variety.

"*Nagtataka ako bakit hindi ako nakakapuntos, mas marami naman akong binitawan sa tiyan* (I don't understand why I couldn't score when I hit him more in the midsection)," Tañamor told NBN's Freddie Abando the morning after the RP boxing team was wiped out.

Meanwhile, team official Nolito Velasco conceded defeat and personally called for a revamp of the national boxing pool.

He urged his superiors to bring in new, promising faces.

He did not say if national coaches should also be included in the proposed shakeup.

What could be as crippling as the failure to stop the recycling of failed boxers is the retention of coaches who have long surpassed the level of their incompetence.

The same thing should apply to the national boxing leaders.

Landing at least a bronze easier said than done

By Artemio T. Engracia Jr.

ATHENS—All it takes to win the gold is four wins. But that, according to the three Filipinos in the taekwondo competitions of the 28th Olympic Games, is easier said than done.

Ironically, it is harder to win the bronze medal, because one has to fight more bouts under a round called "repechage" to get it. That is the peculiarity of the rules governing taekwondo in the Athens Games.

But if there's a chance for any Filipino to win the elusive Olympic gold medal outside of boxing, it should be in taekwondo. Starting Thursday, they just might do it, and that's coming from the man who's leaving Athens with a heavy heart, boxing leader and former Manila mayor Mel Lopez Jr.

"They have a good chance of doing it," said Lopez the morning after the last of boxing's medal hopes, Harry Tañamor, lost on Saturday night.

Like boxing, taekwondo is a sport that puts premium on height and reach. With weight classifications, the Filipinos stand a good chance of excelling in it on the international stage.

Jesus "Jobet" Morales, head coach of the Philippine team, says an estimated 500,000 Filipinos practice the sport, a base figure that makes boxing leaders like Lopez green with envy.

The Philippine Taekwondo Association headed by Robert Aventajado conducts about 200 tournaments a year nationwide and the sport is being taught in more than 90 percent of private schools, Morales said.

"And we are getting into public schools," said Morales.

In the Olympics, for the first time, an additional round called "sudden death" is fought if the scores of the fighters are tied after the regulation three rounds. The first to score a point wins the match.

A hit to the trunk by a kick or a closed fist counts for a point, and two points are awarded for kicks to the head. No points are awarded for a fist to the face. An extra point is awarded when the opponent is knocked down.

Olympic veteran Donald Geisler III is elated that the rules have added the "sudden death" round to break ties since he has been a victim of referees' subjective judgment on "superiority."

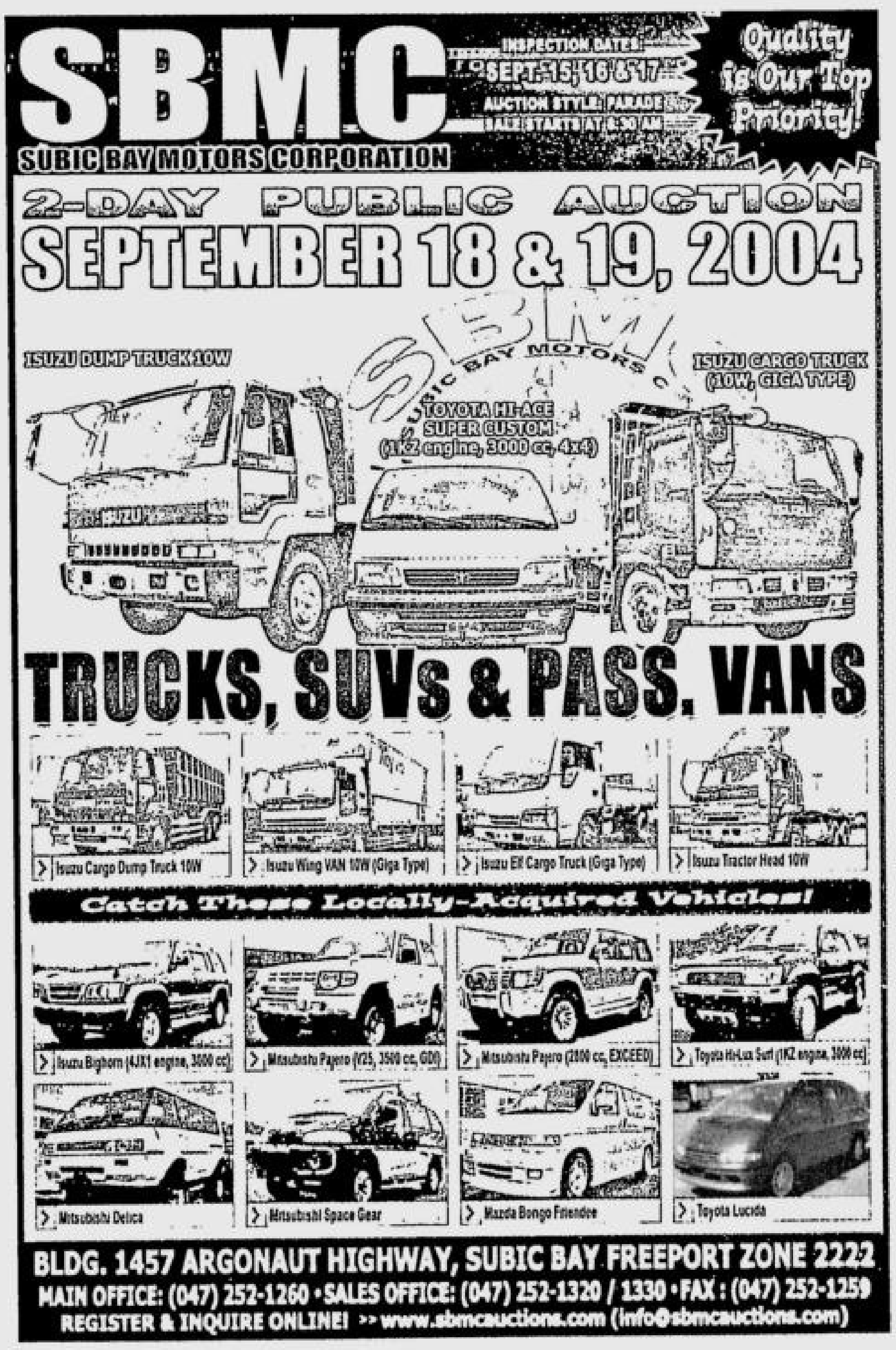
Morales said the taller fighter would have the edge, and the shorter one will have to make up for it with speed.

"He has to be quicker and he has to fight inside," he said. The Filipinos are neither tall nor short for their divisions.

Geisler is 6-foot-1. Mary Antoinette Rivero is 5-8 and Tshomlee Go is 5-9.

If a fighter loses, he or she still has a chance for a medal in the round called "repechage," where fighters who lost to the two finalists get to fight among themselves for the bronze medal, in effect making the fight for the bronze tougher than a straight path to the gold medal match.

To even the playing field and to prevent a total domination by the Koreans, the Olympic field is limited to a maximum of only four players per country—two each in the men's and women's division. The Koreans chose one category where a Filipino is entered, the women's under-67 kg.



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Gatlin tops thrilling sprint

Five runners finish 100-m under 10 seconds

JUSTIN Gatlin gestures to the appreciative crowd after winning the closest 100-m final in Olympic history. AP

ATHENS—American sprinter Justin Gatlin won the closest Olympic 100 meters in history as the fastest men on earth staged a sporting spectacle that thrilled the world.

"It was a very great race. The competition was stellar," Gatlin said after Sunday's blanket finish that saw the first five dip under 10 seconds for the first time at an Olympics.

Gatlin, bubbling with adrenalin after upstaging the favorites, said: "It was a close race but I felt that I was a hundred miles from anybody." "I've been dreaming about this since I started racing," said the 22-year-old who trains six hours a day and even shovels snow off the track so he can keep going in the depths of winter.

On a bakingly hot Mediterranean evening, the Blue Riband of athletics was pure theater.

The capacity crowd, pumped up before the start like boxing fans at a heavyweight fight, clapped along to the theme tune from "Zorba the Greek," its frenetic pace building to a crescendo that had the athletes buzzing.

Sprinters, wired to the moon after hurtling down the track at lightning speed, love to talk the talk afterward and Gatlin was no exception.

"I am honored to have been in one of the best races in history," Gatlin said after beating Portuguese outsider Francis Obikwelu by just one hundredth of a second.

"But did I feel like an underdog? No, I never do, I go out feeling like a champion," he said after psyching himself to produce a personal best of 9.85.

Another hundredth of a second further back in third was defending champion Maurice Greene who said: "I hope the fans enjoyed the show we put on today. It was a great race."

One of the memorable images of the evening was a tragic one as British Paula Radcliffe, hot favorite to win the women's marathon, broke down in tears and slumped down on the road in exhaustion, her cherished dreams in ruins.

She had just one word to say afterward: "Devastated."

In the end, it was world silver medalist Mizuki Noguchi of Japan who conquered the demanding marathon course from the town which gave the race its name to the Panathinaiko amphitheater in Athens, where the modern Games were revived in 1896.

The athletics stadium has turned into a treasure trove of gold for wildly celebrating Swedes.

After Carolina Kluft's heptathlon win, it was the turn of Christian Olsson to land the triple jump and Stefan Holm to take the high jump title. *Reuters*

Jenny joins world team vs Koreans

By Jong Arcano

JENNY Rosales is finally flying to Asia in October, not for her much-awaited Manila homecoming but for a showdown that will pit Koreans against the best of the world.

ROSALES

Rosales, who celebrated her 26th birthday last week, has already received her invitation to be on the side opposing the Koreans, who are expected to be bannered by LPGA big guns Grace Park, Se Ri Pak and Mi Hyun Kim.

Each of the participants in the Korea vs Rest of the World event, patterned after the Ryder Cup and set in the third week of October, is assured of appearance money worth $60,000 (about P3.3 million) and will also get a share of the pot money to be disputed.

Sweden's Annika Sorenstam and American Meg Mallon, the US Open champion, are said to be among those on top of the list of the non-Korean invitees.

Aside from being a first-time winner in the LPGA this season after topping the Chick-Fil-A Championship, Rosales is said to have been picked also because of her association with car manufacturer Hyundai, with which she is working out a lucrative endorsement deal.

Meanwhile, Rosales returns to the Tour this week in the Wachovia LPGA Classic at the Berkleigh Club in Kutztown, Pennsylvania.

Rosales' swing coach, Bong Lopez, said his ward is raring and ready to plunge into a rigid five-week schedule, especially after being advised by the physical therapist of the Los Angeles Lakers not to worry too much about her right wrist.

"She was so relieved when the therapist told her that it was just a pulled muscle and not a fracture," Lopez said.

Cink completes wire-to-wire victory

AKRON, Ohio—American Stewart Cink captured his second title of the year with a wire-to-wire win at the $7-million World Golf Championship NEC Invitational here on Sunday.

Cink carded an even-par 70 to finish at 11-under 269, four strokes ahead of runner-ups Tiger Woods and Rory Sabbatini of South Africa.

Cink became the first player to win an event this year while leading after the first, second and third rounds.

With a 0-6 record when heading into a final round, Cink erased those bad memories at the Firestone Country Club.

Starting the round with a five-shot cushion, Cink forced his pursuers—among them Woods—to take risks. Sabbatini was the lone player to get close, briefly pulling within two shots after a birdie at the 14th.

Cink made 14 pars to go with two birdies and two bogeys in an even-par 70.

He closed with a birdie to finish at 11-under 269, while Woods (69) and Sabbatini (68) finished in a tie for second at 273.

"It's a huge win for me," said Cink. It capped terrific week for Cink, who was named Monday to the United States team for the Ryder Cup.

"My confidence is at an all-time high, starting with the lead (and holding it)," Cink said.

Sabbatini made his presence known with a trio of birdies starting at the sixth.

"I've been struggling with my game this year," said the South African.

"I played with (Cink) yesterday and he hit a couple of bad drives but boy he putted well and managed his game well. I don't know what he did today but it looked like he was making par after par after par and forcing the guys chasing to come and get him," said Woods.

Woods kept his world No. 1 ranking for a record 333rd week. He was under threat from both Ernie Els and Vijay Singh. But both struggled after strong performances at last week's PGA Championship.

Singh tied for 32nd at 3-over 283, while Els tied for 65th. *AFP*

WOMEN'S Olympic marathon champion Mizuki Noguchi leads the pack in this stretch of the race that passes a fitting foreground—the statue of Fidipidis, the first Marathon runner. REUTERS

Lithuania, Spain still unscathed

ATHENS, Greece—Lithuania remained unbeaten in Olympic men's basketball Monday with a 100-85 win over Australia while Spain also moved to 5-0 and knocked out New Zealand from medal contention in an 88-84 win.

Robertas Javtokas scored 23 points and Ksistof Lavrinovic added 18 as Lithuania and Spain remained the only unbeaten teams in the competition. Lithuania has won the last three bronze medals.

Andrew Bogut had 21 points and nine rebounds for Australia, which will play for ninth place on Tuesday.

Spain's win meant the Kiwis, 1-4, cannot advance to the medal round. It also meant that world champion Serbia-Montenegro was still in medal contention ahead of the team's later match Monday against China.

In other games that conclude the preliminary round later Monday, the United States played Angola, Italy takes on Argentina and Greece plays Puerto Rico.

Pau Gasol scored five consecutive points for Spain after New Zealand tied the game at 81-81. New Zealand will play Angola for 11th place on Tuesday. *AP*

From Olympic boxing, let's go to billiards

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WITH the shutout in Olympic boxing, it's now time to leave Athens—if only momentarily. So, let's go back home, and home is Manila. More specifically, let's train our sights once more on billiards, the one sport that has given us honors internationally—consistently even—with the most recent being Alex "The Lion" Pagulayan emerging 2004 World Pool champion in Taiwan.

Alex has even given us something that should be considered more than a bonus; immediately declaring, after his victory, his wish to avail himself of dual citizenship.

"It has been my dream to represent the country in world tournaments," said Alex, who first hit the billiards limelight not as a Filipino but a Canadian, having been plucked out by his mother from his Taguig haunts and hauled off to Toronto when he was barely 14.

In a chat with his Filipino buddies upon his return home from Taiwan, Alex said, "I never liked it there (Toronto, Canada), really. My heart belongs right here, in Manila."

And so, after also signifying to buy a condo unit in Manila and taking up residence in his country of birth, Alex next went to Immigration Commissioner Al Fernandez to take his oath to regain his Filipino citizenship via the dual citizenship act.

"I found him to be a jovial person," said Commissioner Fernandez of Pagulayan. "An ordinary, no-frills guy who really values his roots."

Pagulayan's triumph has again reestablished billiards' stature as a built-in gatherer of international honors for our country. Taking cognizance of this, Solar Sports has embarked on an ambitious program to sustain the momentum of the game by taking a major role in its propagation. Today, it will unfurl the RP-Taiwan 9-Ball Challenge at Robinson's Galleria in Mandaluyong City, ending on Thursday.

Five Filipinos who created quite a storm in the recent World Pool event in Taipei will face a five-man Chinese-Taipei squad bannered by two-time world champion Chao Fong-pang and two-time Asian Games gold medalist Yang Ching-shun.

Marlon Manalo, the guy who eliminated Yang, Django Bustamante and Bata Reyes in succession in the Taiwan World Pool championship, will spearhead the Filipino side together with Dennis Orcullo, the country's hottest cue artist today with his recent megabuck victories over no less than Reyes and Bustamante themselves.

Orcullo also boasts of two wins over Pagulayan prior to the World Pool event in Taipei.

Not for the money but the mere fact that we are going to see the 10 internationally acclaimed cue artists dish out their wares on home grounds is already a gift of a lifetime, although the total pot of P2.2 million is not something to be sneezed at.

The teammates of Orcullo, 25, and Manalo, 28, are Antonio "Nikoy" Lining, Antonio Gabica and Gandy Valle. The three other Taiwanese are world championship runner-up Chang Pei-wei, Fu Che-wei and Kuo Po-cheng.

The one good thing about the dual meet—which I consider a breakthrough in Asian billiards since both sides are definitely the top breeding grounds of world pool greats—is that if you can't make it to Robinson's Galleria in Mandaluyong City, you can catch the matches on Solar Sports Channel 29 (Cable TV) and RPN from 6-9 p.m.

Why, as I keep saying, since Solar Sports came into existence, the face of our sporting world has never been the same again—what with NBA games being enjoyed right in our own living rooms, to name only but one of Solar Sports' blockbuster programs.

It is my wish that our countrymen would prevail in this historic pool event, but if they do not, fine. Just seeing them in the flesh—as in Manalo meeting Chao in one of the five matches today—is already a thrill. It's a date then, 2 p.m. today at Robinson's Galleria in Mandaluyong?

I can't wait to be there—and give myself a lift after our Olympic debacle in boxing.

***

FASTBREAK. Congratulations to Baguio Country Club for winning its first crown in the prestigious Luzvimin Golf Cup in Cebu City last week. The team was composed of Nanette Filler, Norma Lawrence, Liza Rondez, Charlita Diciano and Anne Philips. I'm sure BCC president Rico Agcaoili and general manager Anthony de Leon are just too proud of this historic feat. Take a bow, champs!

Nestlé MILO
The Official Energy Drink of the Philippine Team to the 2004 Athens Summer Olympics

ATHENS SUMMER OLYMPICS MEDAL TALLY

Country	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
China	22	14	10	46
United States	21	21	15	57
Japan	13	6	7	26
Australia	12	8	12	32
Germany	10	9	12	31
France	8	8	7	23
Russia	7	13	16	36
Italy	7	6	7	20
Romania	6	3	2	11
Ukraine	6	2	5	13
Korea	5	10	5	20
Great Britain	5	7	7	19
Greece	4	1	3	8
Netherlands	3	6	8	17
Hungary	3	4	1	8
Sweden	3	0	1	4

Drilon Cup slated

IN A REMATCH of the final leg of the Triple Crown Series, Empire King aims to validate his supremacy when he battles archrival Cover Girl for the P1-million Philracom-sponsored Senate President Franklin M. Drilon Cup, the 26th edition of the 1867 Founders' Cup, on Aug. 29 at the San Lazaro Leisure Park in Carmona, Cavite.

The featured battle between Empire King, winner of the Horseman's Cup—final leg of the Triple Crown Series, and Cover Girl, winner of the Eduardo Cojuangco Cup—1st leg of the TCS, caps Manila Jockey Club's card for the week and serves as the main event for Sunday's action-packed 13-race program.

Winner of the featured race will receive P600,000 and the replica of the Founders' Cup. The second placer wins P225,000 while P125,000 will go to the third finisher and P50,000 for fourth.

Four other highlight events are scheduled—the Burlington Cup, FR Sevilla Cup, No Fear Cup and the Sta. Lucia Realty Cup.

Tiny Buenavista aims to make it big in marathon

ATHENS—Five Filipino runners have competed in the Olympic Games' featured final-day attraction—the marathon—so far. But one of them has elicited as much interest as the man who will carry the country's colors in the Athens Games here—Eduardo Buenavista.

It's not only his height and weight that make Buenavista different. It is also his past accomplishments.

Standing 5 feet and weighing only 45 kilos (99 lbs), Buenavista holds the national marks in three long-distance events—10,000m (29:00.2), 5,000 (13:58) and 3,000 (8:17)—before he shifted to the punishing 42-km marathon where he also owns the country's best time of 2 hours, 18 minutes and 44 seconds.

His aim is to improve this time, which he set during the Japan Marathon in Oita City on Feb. 1, this year.

Buenavista feels that, with his size and weight, he will be at a disadvantage against bigger and taller rivals in the 10,000, 5,000 and 3,000 events in international competitions. *"Pero sa marathon, mas may laban,"* he explains.

SAMSUNG

When he first competed in the Milo Marathon in 2002, he won. Then he set the RP mark in his second attempt at the event in Japan this year. He'll run the marathon for only the third time here.

"Sa isang taon, huling takbo ko na sa 10,000 *at* 5,000 *sa* SEA Games *sa* Manila," Buenavista reveals.

He's small for a marathoner, but Buenavista—because of his past achievements—can be considered the best among the small group of Filipino Olympic marathon entries so far even before he takes off on Aug. 29.

The list includes Benjamin Silva-Netto, who was the first RP marathon entry in the Mexico Games in 1968; Victor Idava (1976 Montreal), Leonardo Illut (1984 Los Angeles), Herman Suizo (1992 Barcelona) and Roy Vence (1996 Atlanta).

Buenavista will definitely be lost among taller rivals at the starting line, but he is confident that despite his size, he'd somehow be able to find a way to jostle with them for a good position.

"Nasa kundisyon ako," says Buenavista. *"Matagal ang* training *ko sa* Baguio. *Tumatakbo ako ng* 50km twice a week *at* two hours 30 minutes *sa ibang araw."*

A day after his arrival here Saturday, Buenavista already tested the searing heat and the asphalt road inside the Olympic Village.

Dolphins, Altas down rivals, retain NC lead

ROMY HOMILLADA

PCU'S Joel Solis (left) fouls SBC's Victor Maneclang in yesterday's NCAA.

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE TRIO of Ramon Retaga Jr., Robert Sanz and Gabby Espinas ran the show for the Philippine Christian U Dolphins as they repulsed the San Sebastian Stags, 84-78, and stayed as pacesetters in the 80th NCAA senior basketball tournament yesterday at the Rizal Coliseum.

Retaga, Sanz and rookie Espinas—who posted another double-double with 20 points and 13 rebounds—combined for 71 points.

Perpetual Help also joined PCU at the top spot with 8-4 slates, as the Altas crushed the Jose Rizal Bombers, 88-61.

San Sebastian settled for third place at 7-5, while JRU bowed out of the Final Four at 4-8.

Tied at 70-70 in the final four minutes, PCU staged a 10-4 run capped by a Retaga three-pointer in the last 58 seconds for an 80-74 edge. Center Pep Moore, however, drilled a three-pointer, followed by a charity shot from Jong Rebuya that pulled the Stags within 80-78.

Earlier, the Baby Dolphins clinched their 10th win in 12 junior games after downing the Staglets, 83-74. The Light Bombers subdued the Altalettes, 92-76.

Meanwhile, the NCAA Policy Board will convene at 5 p.m. today at Casino Español, Manila to discuss if sanctions would be meted on Letran, which resorted to an unprecedented move that saw the NCAA abiding by the temporary restraining order issued by the Manila Regional Trial Court to lift the one-game suspension on Knights center-forward Frederick Rodriguez last Aug. 19.

The scores:

Fourth game (Srs)

PCU 84—Retaga 29, Sanz 22, Espinas 20, Solis 6, Castro 5, Cunanan 2, Garrido 0, Salangsang 0, Belga 0, Acraman 0.

SSC 78—Moore 24, Uy 15, Vicente 13, Najorda 10, Aguilar 6, Maneclang 5, Rebuya 3, De Leon 2, Baluyot 0, Gonzales 0.

Quarters: 15-14, 42-40, 57-54, 84-78.

Ozamiz subdues travel-weary Baguio five

OZAMIZ CITY—The Ozamiz Cotta bucked a shaky start before subduing the travel-weary Baguio Cardinals, 106-92, Sunday night in the NBC (National Basketball Conference) finals at the Gov. Angel Media Sr. gym here. From a 23-16 deficit at the end of the first quarter, the Cotta of Mayor Reynaldo Parojinog struck back behind a 15-0 run through the backcourt duo of Dennis Cabigkis and Dave Cabrera to stay on top for good.

The Cardinals of University of Baguio president Des Bautista took their fifth straight setback—the fourth in a row in their southern swing—to remain at the tailend of the North Division. Egay Echavez and Marlon Basco combined for 10 points in the homestretch en route to Ozamiz's sixth win in 11 outings.

The Cardinals hope to snap their losing streak when they face the resurgent Forward Taguig of Mayor Freddie Tinga on Wednesday at their homecourt.

CJ, Paeng head early qualifiers

DEFENDING World Cup champion CJ Suarez and four-time World Cup titlist Paeng Nepomuceno led the early winners in the 2004 World Cup First Center finals qualifying series held recently in Metro Manila's major tenpin bowling centers.

Suarez, who shared the 2003 Philippine Sportswriters Association Male Athlete of the Year honors, scored 2354 to emerge runner-up in the men's division at the Commonwealth bowling lanes behind Vlad Tuazon, who topped with 2486.

Nepomuceno, a Bowling Hall of Fame awardee, also placed second with 2212 at Paeng's Eastwood bowling center behind veteran George Ongkeko, who led with 2229.

Veteran internationalists Jojo Canare and Liza del Rosario were among the early qualifiers in the series aimed at picking the country's top two representatives to the 2004 Bowling World Cup to be held in December.

Canare topped the women's division at Paeng's Eastwood with a score of 2010, followed by Sunshine Rodriguez who tallied 1566.

Del Rosario took top honors at Powerbowl lanes by scoring 1978 while Cynthia Carabeo was second with 1629.

RP opens Putra Cup bid

By Musong Castillo

LIPPO KARAWACI, Indonesia—Thailand sent its A-Team, Malaysia is bannered by a David Leadbetter student and the Philippines left its most important luggage at home.

That's how things stack up as a Philippine side minus Juvic Pagunsan opens its Putra Cup bid today against the very best in the Southeast Asian region, optimistic of doing well despite the odds.

Thailand recalled its national team from training in the United States to shoot for a third straight title even as Malaysian Ben Leong defends the individual trophy he won over Pagunsan in a classic duel last year in Brunei.

Marvin Dumandan leads the Philippine charge, looking forward to a down-the-wire duel with Leong, the hotshot from the Leadbetter Academy in Florida, in the individual race while anchoring the team's performance.

"Under *ang* score *sa ganitong* course (under par will be the scores in a course like this)," said the 27-year-old Dumandan before playing the only official practice round at the Imperial Klub Golf here yesterday.

Michael Bibat's condition has improved, and Jun Bernis found the par-72, 6,337-yard course to his liking. The last member, pint-sized Boyet Saragoza, feels at home with a layout not demanding much power but precision off the tees.

The junior team, composed of Tonlits Asistio, Laurence Negrido, Gene Bunyi and Matthew Manotoc, also starts its campaign in a division where the Thais are the heavy favorites.

La Salle-Lipa golf slated Oct. 1

HUNDREDS of De La Salle-Lipa alumni and friends are expected on the first tee when the third Stallion Cup Golf Tournament fires off on Oct. 1 at the Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City.

Proceeds of the tournament, organized by the silver jubilarian Batch 1979 of the De La Salle-Lipa High School, will go to the Bro. Jaime Hilario Learning Community, the institution's free night school, as well as to other charity projects.

Batch '79 is gunning to make it three in a row in the team event. For inquiries, call Sammy Baltazar at 0917-8912749, Pancho Villa 0916-7476746 , Elsie Mercado 0917-8983030, Levi Agoncillo 0917-5264836, Rey Luna 0920-9102891 or the DLSL Alumni office (043) 756-2391.

SPORTSWATCH

Team Merrel rules adventure race

TEAM Merrel claimed the 2004 Enduro San Mig Light Adventure Race Manila leg over the weekend. Adventure racer Thumble Remigio skippered the three-man squad of Popo Magtalo and Jojo Macalintal in topping the 18-station elite category, which began and ended at the Eastwood Parking Area in Libis but detoured to different sites around Metro Manila. Their winning time was 40 hours and 23 minutes. Team Merrel finished second during the first leg on Boracay Island won by Team Iligan in April. Sandugo clocked 40 hours and 46 minutes to place second. Joven finished third with a time of 42 hours and 3 minutes. Fourth place went to USTMC-Bidge North while Game Plan wound up fifth.

Patafa induction set Sept. 11

IMMIGRATION Commissioner Alipio "Al" Fernandez, Batangas Gov. Armand Sanchez and Go Teng Kok head the list of officials when the new national executive board of the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association gets inducted into office on Sept. 11 at the Century Park Hotel. Fernandez, a former three-term mayor of Dagupan City, was unanimously installed as Patafa chair while Sanchez was elected Project Director. Go received a fresh four-year mandate in the balloting held last Aug. 13 to usher in his 13th year as head honcho of the athletics body. Fernandez said the selection of Gov. Sanchez as provincial director will further stimulate interest in athletics because of the country's hosting of the 2005 SEA Games. Sanchez hosted the first board meeting cum fellowship dinner of the executive board that includes lawyer Nicanor Sering, SS Lee, Ramon Yu and Cham Teng Young.

Hawks post 9th straight victory

DEFENDING champion University of Manila continued its winning streak in the NAASCU men's basketball tournament, routing newcomer STI College, 98-57, on Sunday at the UM gym. Led by Gener Bernados and handled by coach Loreto Tolentino, the Hawks clinched their ninth straight win this year and 62nd overall since the league's inception four years ago. Bernados topscored with 16 points for the Sampaloc-based Hawks, who led from start to finish in dealing the Olympians another setback. "I told the boys we have to keep our focus even after sweeping the first round," said Tolentino, who is also the coach of Philippine Christian University in the NCAA. The 41-point winning margin by UM over STI was also the biggest so far this year, surpassing the 37 points established by the Hawks also over the Olympians, 83-46, in the first round. Overshadowed by UM's victory was AMA Computer University's 125-117 victory over University of Makati in overtime.

Suico may get Fana rematch

RANDY Suico, still smarting from his controversial loss to WBC No.1 contender Mzonke Fana of South Africa last May, may yet take on the same man for a more lucrative incentive: the WBC crown. With current World Boxing Council 130-lb champ Erik Morales expected to relinquish the title in order to move up to the lightweight class, the door will be opened for Suico's championship crack. Suico, the reigning Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation super-featherweight king, lost by a split decision to Fana in their 120-round WBC eliminator for the right to challenge Morales—despite sending the South African to the canvas twice. The possible Suico-Fana rematch was brought up by South African boxing promoter Branco Milenkovic, who told journalist Gaynor Noyce in an interview that he would attend the WBC convention in Thailand with the Filipino fighter in his mind. Due to the controversial outcome of the Johannesburg bout, the WBC decided to keep Suico (21-1, with 18 KOs) in his lofty No. 2 ranking. Fana is 22-2, with 8 KO's. Suico is currently training for his Oct. 16 OPBF defense against Indonesian Ibrahim Aroby at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

Bates hosts 7-stag derby Wednesday

THE LONG-RUNNING "Annual Richard L. Bates 7-Stag Derby" is all set at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit on Wednesday and Friday. Supporting the event are Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten. For an entry fee of P15,000, a cash prize of P500,000 is at stake. Minimum bet is P7,700. Participants are reminded to submit entries today from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Action starts at 6 p.m. tomorrow with the 3-stag elimination round. For details, call 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750. Derby host Richard Bates, a well-respected gamefowl breeder, said three Bates trio will be raffled off to paying patrons. Meanwhile, 4-stag derbies are also scheduled on Sept. 3 (Tony Faustino), Sept. 10 (Arnold Mendoza) and Sept. 17 (Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association). These derbies stake P300,000 each.

Stagfighting season starts today

THE 2004 stagfighting season officially starts today via the "Annual Las Piñas 6-Stag Derby," beginning at 5 p.m. at the fully air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum. Pagcor Casino Filipino and Sagupaan Complexor 3000 will sponsor the 70-fight program. Derby host Mayor Nene Aguilar will donate derby proceeds to the Las Piñas City Clean and Green project. Early favorites include two-time Ucap Stagfighter winner Sonny Lagon, GCAP president Patrick Antonio, Richard Bates, Balbina 8-stag champion Emil Chua, Sen. Ramon Revilla and 2004 World Slasher champ Rudy Salud Also seeing action is the powerhouse team from the National Cockers Association (NCA) led by Gov. Ito Ynares, Jun Santiago, Boy Jiao, Tony Tan and Rudy Jingco. For inquiries, call 873-1040 and 874-3910.

Mt. Malarayat hosts Mid-Amateur Friday

ACTION in seven divisions goes full blast when the two-day third Active Group Mid-Amateur Open tees off on Friday at the Mount Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa City.

Some of the country's finest amateurs who are 30 years old and above are entered in the tournament organized by the Active Group, developer of the sprawling golf complex, and Pacsports.

The competition, launched in 2001 by Active Group Inc. chair Antonio A. Turalba Sr., is stroke play over 36 holes for all seven classes based on age and handicaps.

Mount Malarayat is a 27-hole all-weather championship course designed by the internationally renowned golf course architects J. Michael Poellet Design Group.

For inquiries, call Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club at (043)756-7007 or 814-0743.

HIGH JUMPER: Canada's Mark Boswell competes in the high jump final. AP

Balce arranges title battle with Arevalo

MARK Balce whipped Gerald Ngo, 6-0, 6-0, yesterday to arrange a titular showdown with Patrick Arevalo for the boys' 14-under crown in the Adidas Tennis Challenge at the Yñares Sports Complex clay courts in Pasig.

In the other featured semifinal match, Pablo Olivarez edged Marvin Serito, 6-2, 5-7, 6-1, and set up a clash with Christian Canlas, who earlier downed Daniel Macalino, 7-5, 6-0, for the boys' 16-under championship.

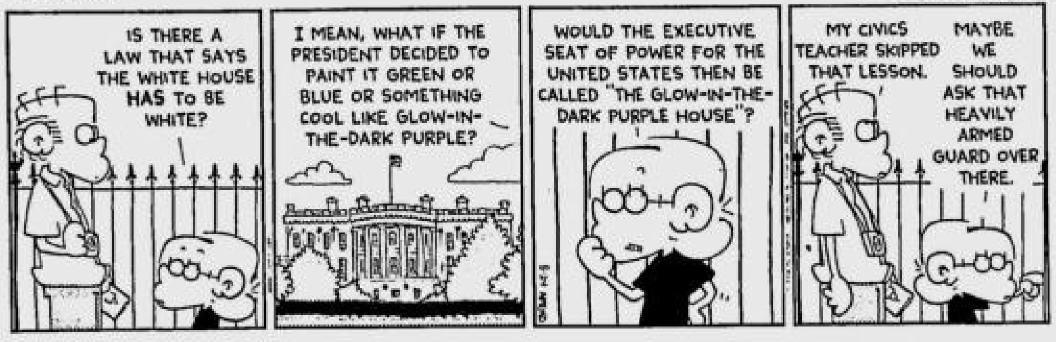
Adidas-backed Kyle Dandan tripped Joseph Arcilla, 7-5, 6-4, and Ralph Barte blasted Jordan Cimafranca, 6-2, 6-4, to gain the junior men's 21-under final.

Disputing the girl's 14-under title are Zhane Quitara and Christine Patrimonio.

Cebu's Bernardine Siso beat Kyle Çordero, 6-2, 6-1, and forged a title clash with Akio Sy in the boys' 12-under event.

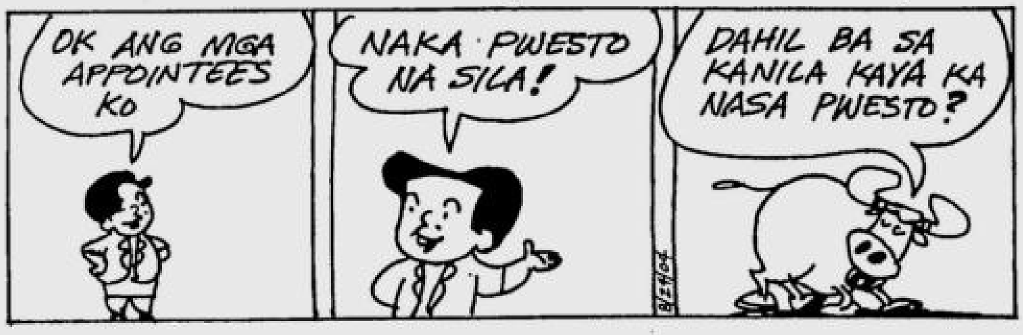
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


IS THERE A LAW THAT SAYS THE WHITE HOUSE HAS TO BE WHITE?
I MEAN, WHAT IF THE PRESIDENT DECIDED TO PAINT IT GREEN OR BLUE OR SOMETHING COOL LIKE GLOW-IN-THE-DARK PURPLE?
WOULD THE EXECUTIVE SEAT OF POWER FOR THE UNITED STATES THEN BE CALLED "THE GLOW-IN-THE-DARK PURPLE HOUSE"?
MY CIVICS TEACHER SKIPPED THAT LESSON.
MAYBE WE SHOULD ASK THAT HEAVILY ARMED GUARD OVER THERE.

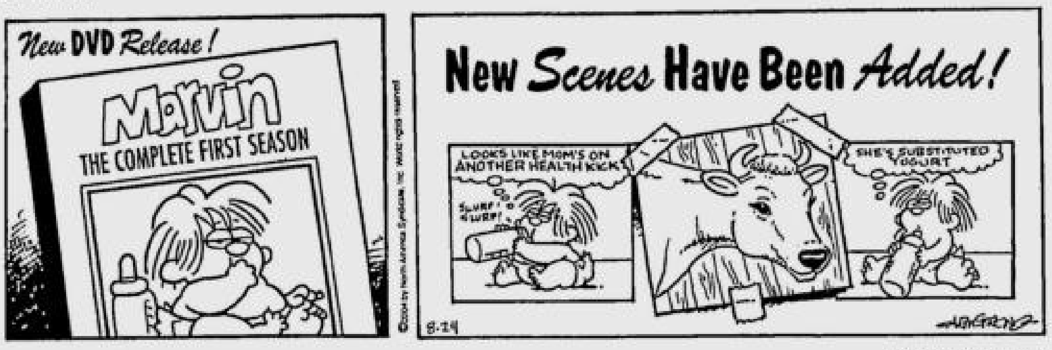
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


OK ANG MGA APPOINTEES KO
NAKA PWESTO NA SILA!
DAHIL BA SA KANILA KAYA KA NASA PWESTO?
8/24/04

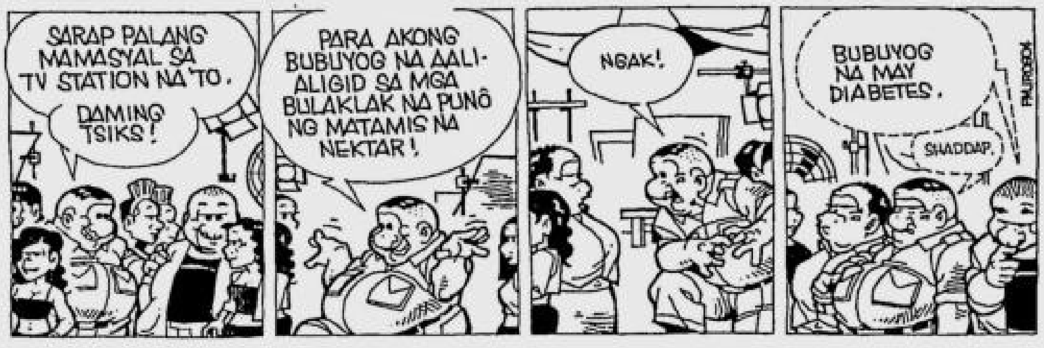
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


New DVD Release!
Marvin
THE COMPLETE FIRST SEASON
New Scenes Have Been Added!
LOOKS LIKE MOM'S ON ANOTHER HEALTH KICK
SLURF! SLURF!
SHE'S SUBSTITUTED YOGURT
8-24

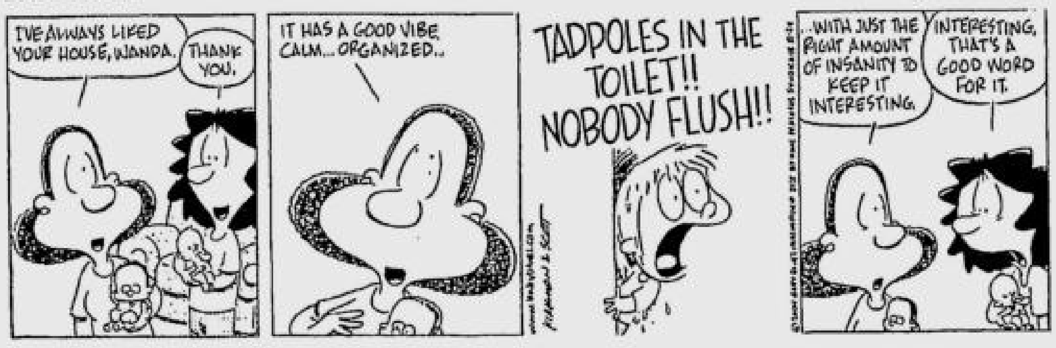
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SARAP PALANG MAMASYAL SA TV STATION NA 'TO.
DAMING TSIKS!
PARA AKONG BUBUYOG NA AALI-ALIGID SA MGA BULAKLAK NA PUNÔ NG MATAMIS NA NEKTAR!
NGAK!
BUBUYOG NA MAY DIABETES.
SHADDAP.

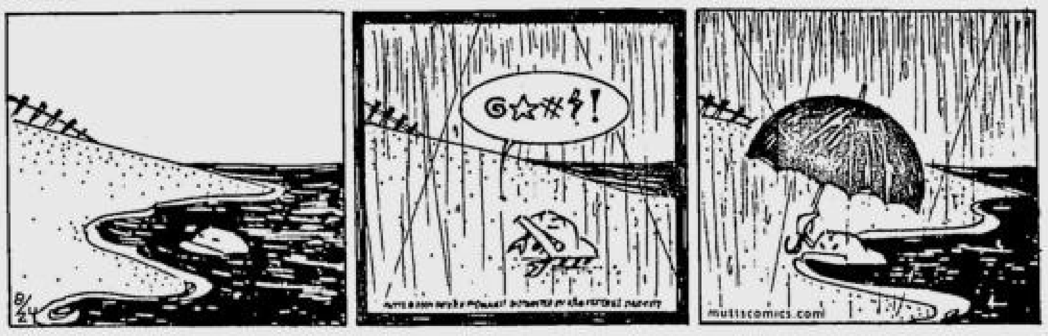
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I'VE ALWAYS LIKED YOUR HOUSE, WANDA.
THANK YOU.
IT HAS A GOOD VIBE. CALM... ORGANIZED..
TADPOLES IN THE TOILET!! NOBODY FLUSH!!
...WITH JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF INSANITY TO KEEP IT INTERESTING.
INTERESTING. THAT'S A GOOD WORD FOR IT.

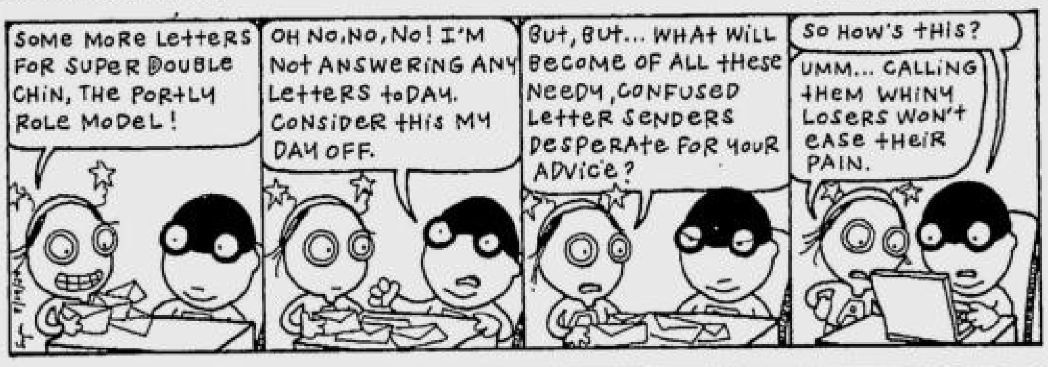
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


G☆*$!
mutiscomics.com

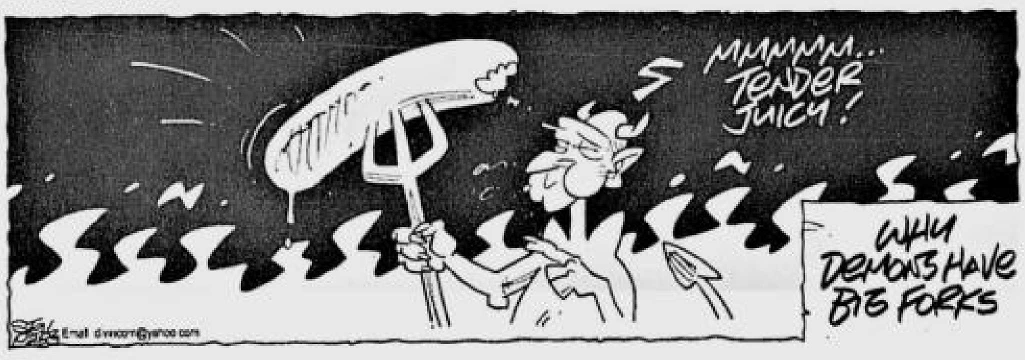
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SOME MORE LETTERS FOR SUPER DOUBLE CHIN, THE PORTLY ROLE MODEL!
OH NO, NO, NO! I'M NOT ANSWERING ANY LETTERS TODAY. CONSIDER THIS MY DAY OFF.
BUT, BUT... WHAT WILL BECOME OF ALL THESE NEEDY, CONFUSED LETTER SENDERS DESPERATE FOR YOUR ADVICE?
SO HOW'S THIS?
UMM... CALLING THEM WHINY LOSERS WON'T EASE THEIR PAIN.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MMMMM... TENDER JUICY!
WHY DEMONS HAVE BIG FORKS
Email divecom@yahoo.com

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a thorough, investigative mind. You're an excellent researcher, and you love to untangle mysteries. You work hard to obtain the information you need for any project. People want you on their team. You're often private about your deepest feelings. Your year ahead focuses on your closest partnerships. New love is possible.
Birthdate of: Carmine Giovinazzo, actor; Antonia Susan Byatt, author; Steve Guttenberg, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Old issues dealing with children resurface now. Just cope as best you can. Young minds are precious and important for the future.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Past family issues are on your doorstep again. Look upon this as a good time to straighten out domestic confusion.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Checks in the mail are late, communication is confused, and everything having to do with ground transportation is delayed and fouled up. (Don't buy a car until after Sept. 2.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): If you're looking for a job, go back to previous places you applied to once before. Old opportunities to boost earnings are the best now (not new ones).

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Mercury is retrograde in your sign now. This definitely means that relationships from the past and ex-partners are once again on the scene. Just remember: You can't re-create the past.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Mercury is your ruler, and right now it is retrograde (until Sept. 2). That's why you feel at loose ends and not sure if you're coming or going.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Expect to run into old friends now. This is an excellent time to swap lies about the bad old days. Involvement in groups from the past is likely.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): This is not a good time to put forward your agenda for new ventures. However, it's an excellent time to go back to what was already on the drawing board. Talk to bosses about your pet project.

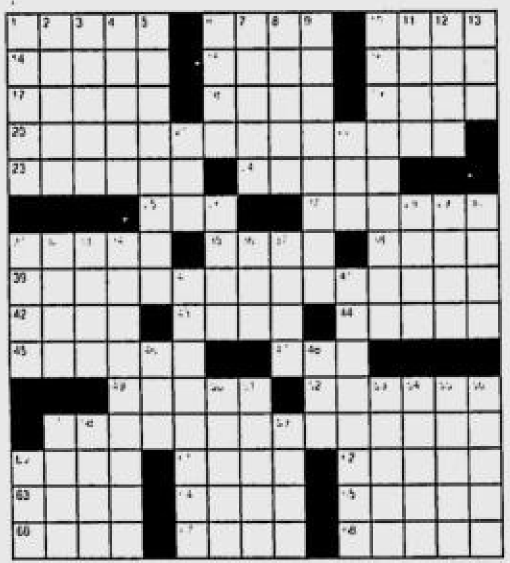
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): If you want to travel somewhere now, you're best served by going somewhere you've been before. Even then, expect delays and confused communication about arrangements. Double-check everything!

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is a good time to clarify touchy details about shared possessions and the joint ownership of anything. You can also define what your boundaries and responsibilities are about something.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Ex-partners are back on the scene. You can run, but you can't hide. Use this time (until Sept. 2) to patch up differences and put certain issues to rest.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You cannot avoid delays and confusion at work. That's all there is to it. But you can avoid feeling frustrated. Your reaction to everything is your choice. Right?

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

8/24/04

ACROSS
1 Sweetheart
6 Volvo rival
10 Double agent
14 Post fresh troops
15 "M*A*S*H" star
16 Actor Estrada
17 Overdo the drama
18 Welfare
19 Kidder's "Superman" role
20 Patient's complaint
23 False name
24 Thalia's sister
25 Hot tub
27 Climbs on
31 In the crow's-nest
35 Island near Java
38 Seldom seen
39 Start of physician's reply
42 Hitch
43 Major following?
44 Below, poetically
45 Meal
47 Thurman of films
49 Defense grp.
52 Steps
57 End of physician's reply
60 Icahn or Sagan
61 1982 Disney flick
62 Musical exercise piece
63 Watch face
64 Aaron or Williams
65 Song from "West Side Story"
66 Last word in a threat
67 Dates
68 _ _ we a pair?

DOWN
1 Author Adler
2 Detroit dud
3 Exxon rival
4 Metz morning
5 Other side's agent
6 Cut, as wood
7 Motrin alternative
8 Oil-well firefighter Red
9 Vinegar choice
10 Capital of Victoria
11 Dental exam?
12 Subway route
13 Squeeze (out)
21 Rascal
22 Robert or Lance
26 Touch against
28 Granny
29 Lively pace
30 Third son
31 Pre-1991 atlas abbr.
32 Johnnycake
33 Snare
34 Specialized cell structure
36 ABA member
37 Stead
40 Promises to marry
41 Bete noire
46 Wok sauce
48 NYC arena
50 Nimbi
51 Certain bee
53 Perfume from petals
54 Harden
55 French sculptor
56 Elbow grease
57 Spinnaker or spanker
58 Historic stretches
59 Pen fills
60 B-F connection

Monday's Puzzle Solved

A	C	T	I	N		S	P	U	R		J	U	S	T
B	I	O	T	A		T	U	N	A		A	S	T	O
H	R	O	S	S	P	E	R	O	T		M	E	A	N
O	C	T		H	O	P	I		E	N	E	R	G	Y
R	E	S	C	U	E		M	S	D	O	S			
			L	A	M	B		P	R	O	M	I	S	E
A	C	H	Y		S	O	H	A		N	O	D	O	Z
R	O	O	D	S		W	H	Y		E	N	L	A	I
C	R	U	E	T		[illegible]	O	F	E		R	E	P	O
H	E	R	B	A	G	E		D	A	D	O			
			A	G	A	R	N		K	E	E	P	O	N
L	E	H	R	E	R		U	V	E	A		L	A	O
A	V	E	R		R	O	B	E	R	T	C	A	R	O
N	E	R	O		E	R	I	E		H	A	Z	E	S
K	N	E	W		T	B	A	R		S	P	A	D	E

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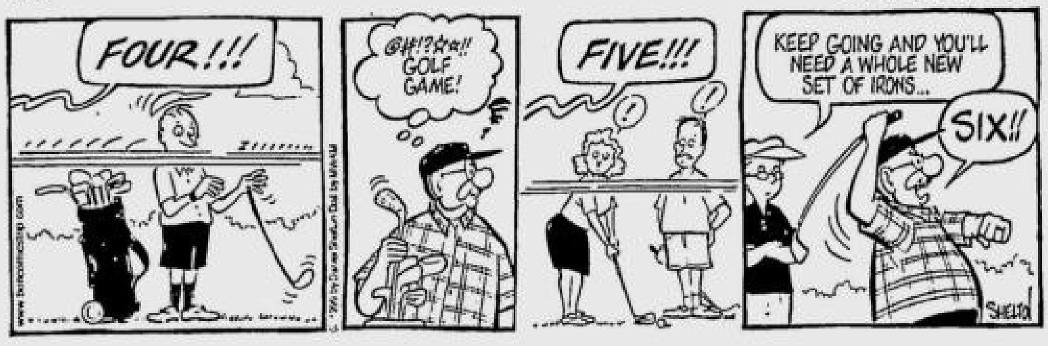
8/24/04

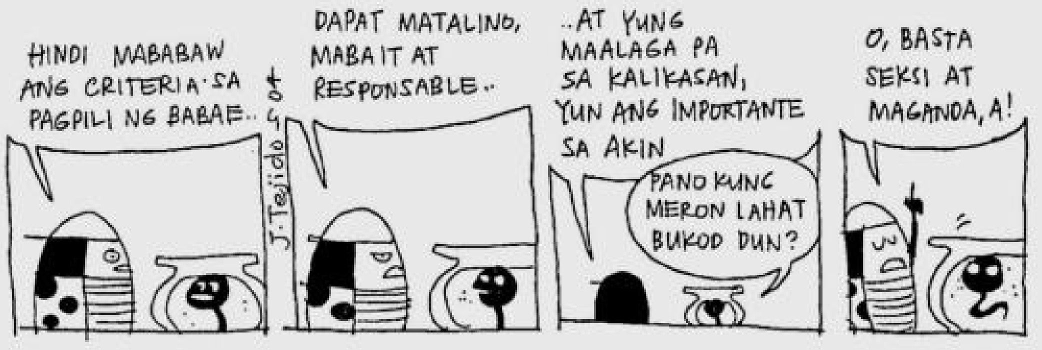
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


FOUR!!!
@#!?☆☆!! GOLF GAME!
FIVE!!!
!
!
KEEP GOING AND YOU'LL NEED A WHOLE NEW SET OF IRONS...
SIX!!
SHELTON

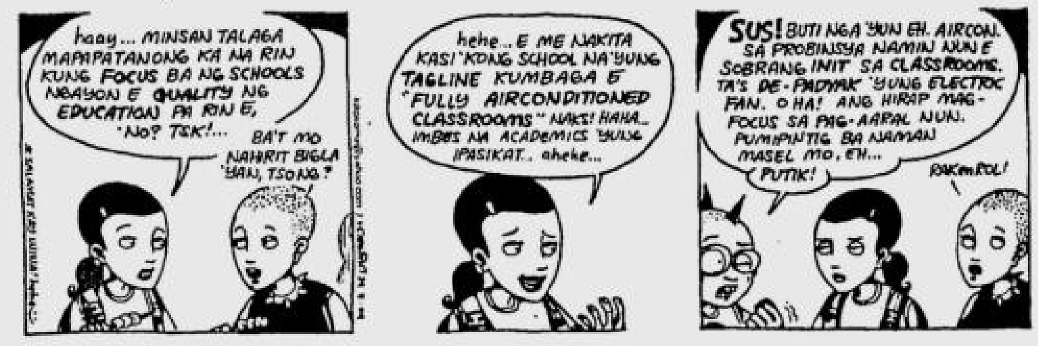
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


HINDI MABABAW ANG CRITERIA SA PAGPILI NG BABAE..
DAPAT MATALINO, MABAIT AT RESPONSABLE..
..AT YUNG MAALAGA PA SA KALIKASAN, YUN ANG IMPORTANTE SA AKIN
PANO KUNG MERON LAHAT BUKOD DUN?
O, BASTA SEKSI AT MAGANDA, A!
J. Tejido 04

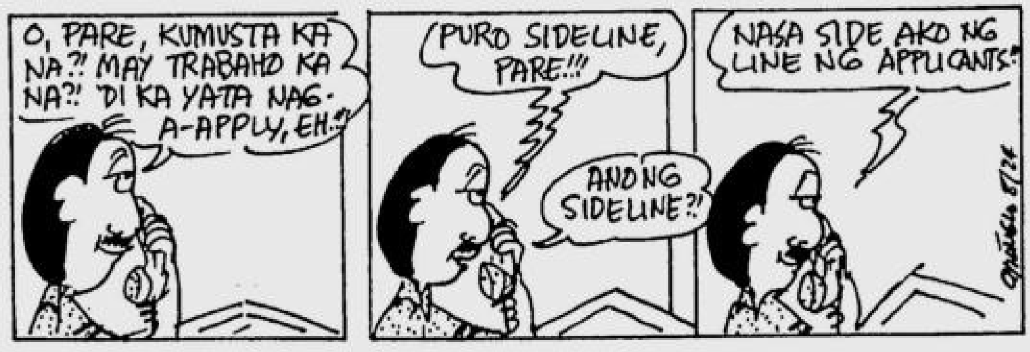
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


haay... MINSAN TALAGA MAPAPATANONG KA NA RIN KUNG FOCUS BA NG SCHOOLS NGAYON E QUALITY NG EDUCATION PA RIN E, 'NO? TSK!...
BA'T MO NAHIRIT BIGLA 'YAN, TSONG?
hehe... E ME NAKITA KASI 'KONG SCHOOL NA 'YUNG TAGLINE KUMBAGA E "FULLY AIRCONDITIONED CLASSROOMS" NAKS! HAHA... IMBES NA ACADEMICS 'YUNG IPASIKAT.. ahehe...
SUS! BUTI NGA 'YUN EH. AIRCON. SA PROBINSYA NAMIN NUN E SOBRANG INIT SA CLASSROOMS. TA'S DE-PADYAK 'YUNG ELECTRIC FAN. O HA! ANG HIRAP MAG-FOCUS SA PAG-AARAL NUN. PUMIPINTIG BA NAMAN MASEL MO, EH...
PUTIK!
RAKenROL!

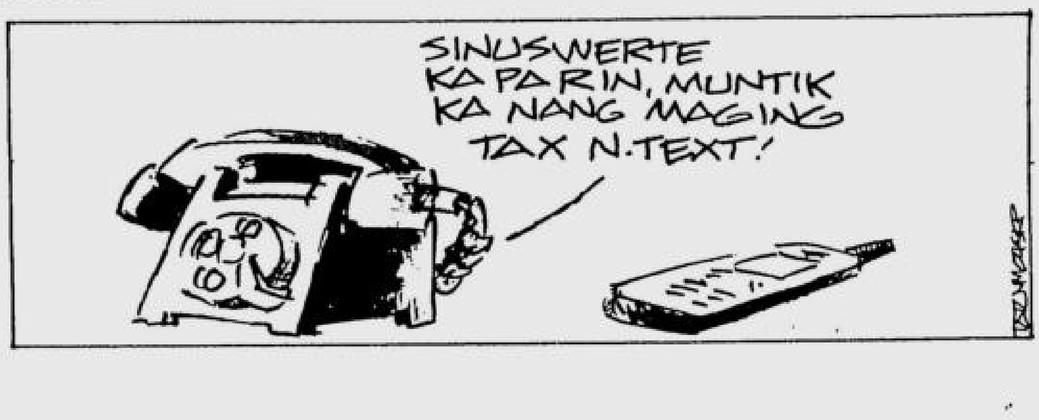
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


O, PARE, KUMUSTA KA NA?! MAY TRABAHO KA NA?! 'DI KA YATA NAG-A-APPLY, EH?!
PURO SIDELINE, PARE!!!
ANONG SIDELINE?!
NASA SIDE AKO NG LINE NG APPLICANTS!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


SINUSWERTE KA PA RIN, MUNTIK KA NANG MAGING TAX N.TEXT!

Bench show 'Understatement' of the year

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

THE BENCH "Understatement" fashion show was absolutely awesome!

Everything, from the stage design to the choice of models down to the music, jelled so well. In French, it could very well be called *panachage*. Meaning, the Bench show was just the right blend.

It also had a French touch when the Lefarfad acrobats took center stage much to the delight of the jam-packed crowd. The French acrobats almost stole the show from the models. It would have been more exciting if Bench's premier endorser, **Richard Gomez**, joined the acrobats as they glided so gracefully like demigods onstage.

Even if Goma is already a papa to Juliana, he remains a "papable" to Bench's clientele. That night at the Big Dome, he showed all and sundry that he still has a body to die for. He wore a shiny flowing cape, which was only fitting for the "king" of Bench.

Through all the fashion changes, Bench has tapped new celebrity endorsers, but it cannot be denied that Goma started it all for the Ben Chan line.

Many male fans were hoping to see **Kristine Hermosa** in something skimpy, but she wore a denim outfit instead.

Purple briefs

Jay-R wowed the screaming females in the audience when he grooved on stage with nothing but electrifying purple briefs on. After the show he playfully said, "That's just for starters. It's my first time for Bench so I'll reserve the rest for the next show."

Geneva Cruz was a standout with her bronzed buffed body as she sashayed in an all-white bikini. I almost forgot she already is a mother!

Diether Ocampo looked gaunt but was still gorgeous. **Marvin Agustin** exuded that "little lost boy" charm and **Marc Nelson** was disarmingly sexy.

First-timer **Rainier Castillo** was obviously jittery but that did not stop his fans from shrieking. He modeled Bench's new denim line. Maybe in the next show he will be a bit more daring and at ease.

All in all, the Bench "Understatement" show was truly a feast for the senses. With their playful and provocative moves, the models made quite a "passion statement" about how to be sensuous and sexy.

Speaking of the "Understatement" fashion show, I heard that a guy pretended to be a security guard checking the dressing room. He was caught taking pictures of **Juliana Palermo** with his cell phone camera. I wonder where the real security guards were at that time. Perhaps too engrossed gawking at the sexy stars all over the place?

Certified

Guess who these former pro cagers

BENCH/ A26

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	11:35, 2:10, 4:45 7:20, 9:55	PG-13
2	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:00, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45, 10:20	PG-13
3	STEPFORD WIVES	11:50, 1:50, 3:50, 5:50, 7:50, 10:00	PG-13
4	THE VILLAGE	11:30, 2:05, 4:40 7:15, 10:00	PG-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

COLLATERAL	R13	12:00,2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00
CINDERELLA STORY	GP	11:50,1:50,3:50, 5:50,7:50,9:50
ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	PG13	12:40,3:05,5:30,7:55,10:20
THE VILLAGE	PG13	12:20,2:45,5:10,7:35,10:00
GARFIELD THE MOVIE	GP	12:00,1:45,3:30, 5:20,7:10,9:00
STEPFORD WIVES	PG13	1:25,3:35,5:45,7:55,10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2227 / 6337851 loc. 171

1 (DOLBY)	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	PG - 13 / FS:12:50 pm, 3:05 pm, 5:20 pm, 7:35 pm, LMF: 9:50 pm
2 (DOLBY)	THE STEPFORD WIVES	PG - 13 / FS:11:25 am, 1:40 pm, 3:55 pm, 6:10 pm, 8:25 pm, LMF: 10:40 pm
3 (DOLBY)	A CINDERELLA STORY	GP / FS:11:30 am, 1:30 pm, 3:30 pm, 5:30 pm, 7:30 pm, LMF: 9:30 pm
4 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE	PG-13 / FS:11:30 am, 1:50 pm, 4:10 pm, 6:30 pm LMF: 8:50 pm

PREMIERE

(DOLBY)	THE STEPFORD WIVES	PG - 13 / FS : 12:00 pm, 2:15 pm, 4:30 pm, 6:45 pm, LMF: 9:00 pm

SUPER CINERAMA
isetann CINERAMA COMPLEX RECTO tel 733.4238

1. (DOLBY)	RESERVE
2.	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR
3.	KARELASYON
4.	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5.	BANGKOK HAUNTED

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1	RESERVED
2	DEAD PEOPLE
3	KARELASYON
4 (SDDS)	THE VILLAGE
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6 (DOLBY)	ALIEN VS, PREDATO
7 (DTS)	ALIEN VS, PREDATO
8	RESERVE
9	RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	ALIEN VS, PREDATO
3	THE CINDERELLA STORY

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1	RESERVE
2	RESERVE
3	BANGKOK HAUNTED
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1	BANGKOK HAUNTED
2	KARELASYON
3	COLLATERAL
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5 (DOLBY)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR
6	THE VILLAGE

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007

1 (DOLBY)	ALIEN VS, PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (SDDS)	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR
2 (SDDS)	ELLA ENCHANTED
3 (DTS)	COLLATERAL
4 GOLD (DTS)	THE STEPFORD WIVES
5 GOLD (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
6 GOLD (SDDS)	THE CINDERELLA STORY
7 GOLD (DOLBY)	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR
8 (JPMSL)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
9 (JPMSL)	BANGKOK HAUNTED
10 (JPMSL)	GARFIELD

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta Center
ALIMALL CINEPLEX
Tel 911-3101 loc 8242 / 8281 / 8397

3	(Dolby)	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	(SDDS)	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5	(DTS)	THE VILLAGE
6	(Dolby)	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
7	(Dolby)	STEFORD WIVES

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
4	RESERVED

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX)	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3 (DTS EX)	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	THE VILLAGE
3 (DOLBY)	COLLATERAL
4 (DTS)	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	AROUND THE WORLD
3 (DOLBY)	GARFIELD
4 (DTS)	ELLA ENCHANTED

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	CATWOMAN

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72

1 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
2 (DOLBY)	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR
3 (DOLBY)	THE STEPFORD WIVES
4 (DOLBY)	THE CINDERELLA STORY

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

1	KARELASYON
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 (DTS)	ALIENT VS, PREDATOR

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2 (DTS)	THE CINDERELLA STORY
3 (DOLBY)	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR
4	THE VILLAGE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2 (DOLBY)	THE CINDERELLA STORY
3 (DTS)	ALIENT VS, PREDATOR
4	THE VILLAGE

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	GARFIELD
3 (DOLBY)	RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
3 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
4 (DTS)	GARFIELD

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3327

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	THE CINDERELLA STORY
3 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS)	I - ROBOT
2	KARELASYON
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 (DTS)	CATWOMAN

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY)	THE VILLAGE
2	KARELASYON
3 (DTS)	ALIENT VS, PREDATOR
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	THE CINDERELLA STORY

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	COLLATERAL
3 (DTS)	ELLA ENCHANTED
4 (DOLBY)	ALIENT VS PREDATOR

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	COLLATERAL
3	PERLAS
4	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1	ALIENT VS. PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

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movietime
SM CINEMA

NOW SHOWING

Central

SM MEGAMALL 6331901

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	COLLATERAL
3	CATWOMAN
4	THE VILLAGE
5	STEPFORD'S WIVES
6	GERMAN FILM FESTIVAL
7	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
8	GARFIELD
9	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
11	CINDERELLA STORY
12	DEAD PEOPLE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	CINDERELLA STORY
2	CATWOMAN
3	I, ROBOT
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5	COLLATERAL
6	THE VILLAGE
7	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
8	GARFIELD
9	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10	ELLA ENCHANTED
11	DEAD PEOPLE
12	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2

SM CITY MANILA

1	THE VILLAGE
2	STEPFORD'S WIVES
3	COLLATERAL
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5	GARFIELD
6	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
7	CATWOMAN
8	ELLA ENCHANTED
9	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
10	DEAD PEOPLE
11	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
12	CINDERELLA STORY

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	THE CINDERELLA STORY
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
5	STEPFORD'S WIVES
6	THE ALAMO
7	THE VILLAGE
8	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

SM CITY STA. MESA 7149522 • 7161416

1	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2	COLLATERAL
3	THE VILLAGE
4	CINDERELLA STORY
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
6	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
7	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
8	GARFIELD
9	STEPFORD'S WIVES
10	DEAD PEOPLE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN 2514302

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	COLLATERAL
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2

North

SM CITY MARILAO (044) 933 2013 to 17

1	COLLATERAL
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	THE VILLAGE
4	THE CINDERELLA STORY

SM CITY PAMPANGA 7128015

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
3	THE VILLAGE
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	DIRTY DANCING: HAVANA KNIGHTS
6	COLLATERAL

SM CITY BAGUIO (074) 4464505

1	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
2	THE VILLAGE
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

South

SM CITY LAS PIÑAS 8066888

1	THE ALAMO
2	CINDERELLA STORY
3	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
4	STEPFORD'S WIVES
5	COLLATERAL
6	CATWOMAN
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
8	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
9	THE VILLAGE
10	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2

SM CITY BICUTAN 7763255

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
4	THE VILLAGE

SM SUPER CENTER SUCAT 8294975

1	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
4	THE VILLAGE

SM CITY BACOOR (046)4173868

1	DEAD PEOPLE
2	COLLATERAL
3	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
4	THE VILLAGE
5	CATWOMAN
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
7	CINDERELLA STORY
8	GARFIELD

SM CITY DASMA (046) 4323201-04

1	ELLA ENCHANTED
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	THE VILLAGE
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

SM CITY LUCENA (042) 7108877-80

1	COLLATERAL
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	WHOLE 10 YARDS
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

Visayas & Mindanao

SM CITY CEBU (032) 2313876

1	IMELDA
2	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
3	PRINCE & ME
4	DIRTY DANCING: HAVANA KNIGHTS
5	COLLATERAL
6	THE UNINVITED
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
8	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

SM CITY ILOILO (033) 3209422

1	DEAD PEOPLE
2	RESERVED
3	ELLA ENCHANTED
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	PRINCE & ME
6	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
7	RESERVED
8	AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS

SM CITY DAVAO (082) 2976998

1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	COLLATERAL
3	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4	PRINCE & ME
5	ALONG CAME POLLY
6	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO (088) 8592884

1	COLLATERAL
2	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3	DIRTY DANCING: HAVANA KNIGHTS
4	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

THE PODIUM CINEMA

1
ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
11:15 FS/ 11:45 MF/2:00/4:15/6:30/ 8:45/10:25 LFS/ 11:00 LMF/12:40 END

2
STEPFORD'S WIVES
11:50 FS/12:20 MF/2:25/4:30/6:35/ 8:40/10:15 LFS/ 10:45 LMF/12:20 END

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Bench show 'Understatement'

From page A25

are who are now both coaches. They have more on their agenda than honing the basketball skills of young players. Both of them are said to be always the last ones to leave the locker rooms because they enjoy the view. They are certified gays, according to insiders. I won't be surprised if one of the young cagers shout "Foul" soon!

Bong's loves

Still on basketball, I bumped into

BENCH/ A27

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3	Dolby NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	11:00 am 1:00 pm 3:00 pm 5:00 pm 7:00 pm 9:00 pm
4	SDDS ALIEN vs PREDATOR	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
5	dts THE VILLAGE	12:10 pm 2:25 pm 4:40 pm 6:55 pm 9:10 pm
6	Dolby BANGKOK HAUNTED 2	11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
7	Dolby STEPFORD WIVES	11:00 am 1:00 pm 3:00 pm 5:00 pm 7:00 pm 9:00 pm

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MANILA	
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MAXIM	CLOSED
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ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	MASARAP NA PUGAD / TUKAAN
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
B	CLOSED
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA 1, 2, 3 & 4	ALIEN VS PREDATOR, STEPFORD WIVES, CINDERELLA STORY, THE VILLAGE
PREMIERE THEATRE	STEPFORD WIVES
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	GARFIELD
CINEMA-2	INDECENT BEHAVIOR (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-3	CINDERELLA STORY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	COLLATERAL
CINEMA-6	I ROBOT
CINEMA-7	CATWOMAN
CINEMA-8	KARELASYON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	STEFORD WIVES
CINEMA-12	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2
CINEMA-14	THE VILLAGE
CINEMA-15	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
(LAS PINAS)	ALIEN VS PREDATOR
CINEMA-1	ELLA ENCHANTED
CINEMA-2	COLLATERAL
CINEMA-4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR — FS 12 50 pm, 3 05 pm, 5 20 pm, 7.35 pm, LMF : 9.50 pm (PG-13)

2 THE STEPFORD WIVES — FS 11.25 am, 1.40 pm, 3.55 pm, 6 10 pm, 8 25 pm, LMF : 10.40 pm (PG-13)

3 A CINDERELLA STORY — FS 11 30 am, 1 30 pm, 3 30 pm, 5 30 pm, 7.30 pm, LMF : 9:30 pm (GP)

4 THE VILLAGE — FS 11 30 am, 1 50 pm, 4 10 pm, 6:30 pm LMF : 8 50 pm (PG-13)

PREMIERE THEATRE — THE STEPFORD WIVES — FS : 12 00 pm, 2:15 pm, 4:30 pm, 6.45 pm, LMF ; 9:00 pm (PG-13)

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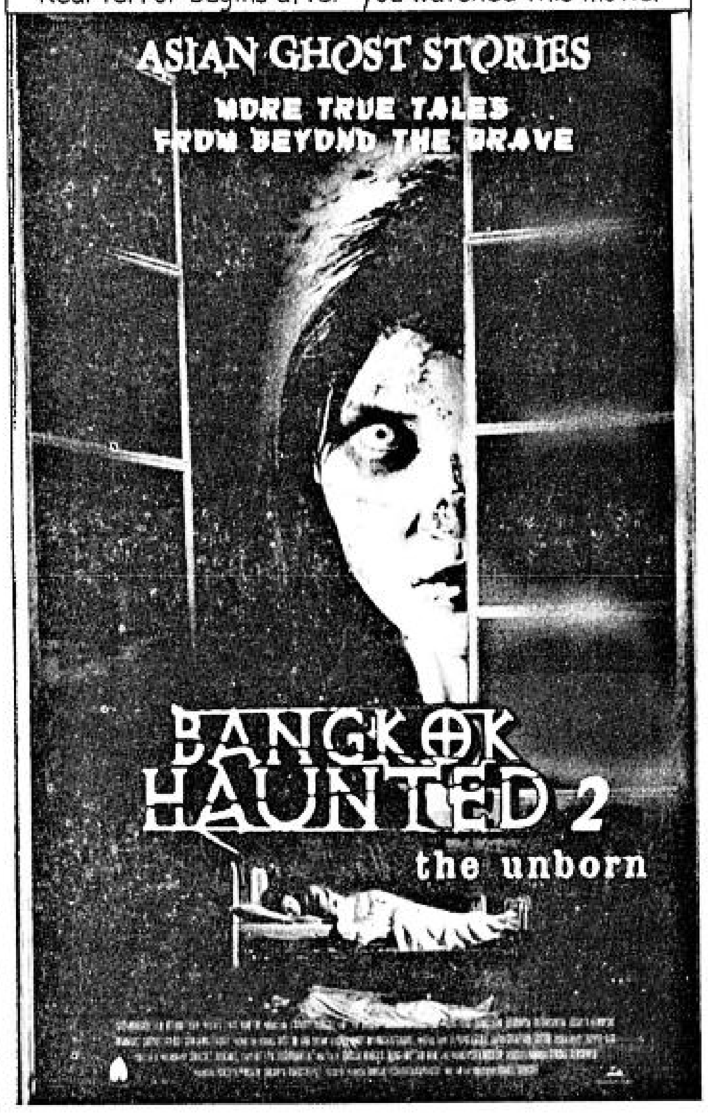
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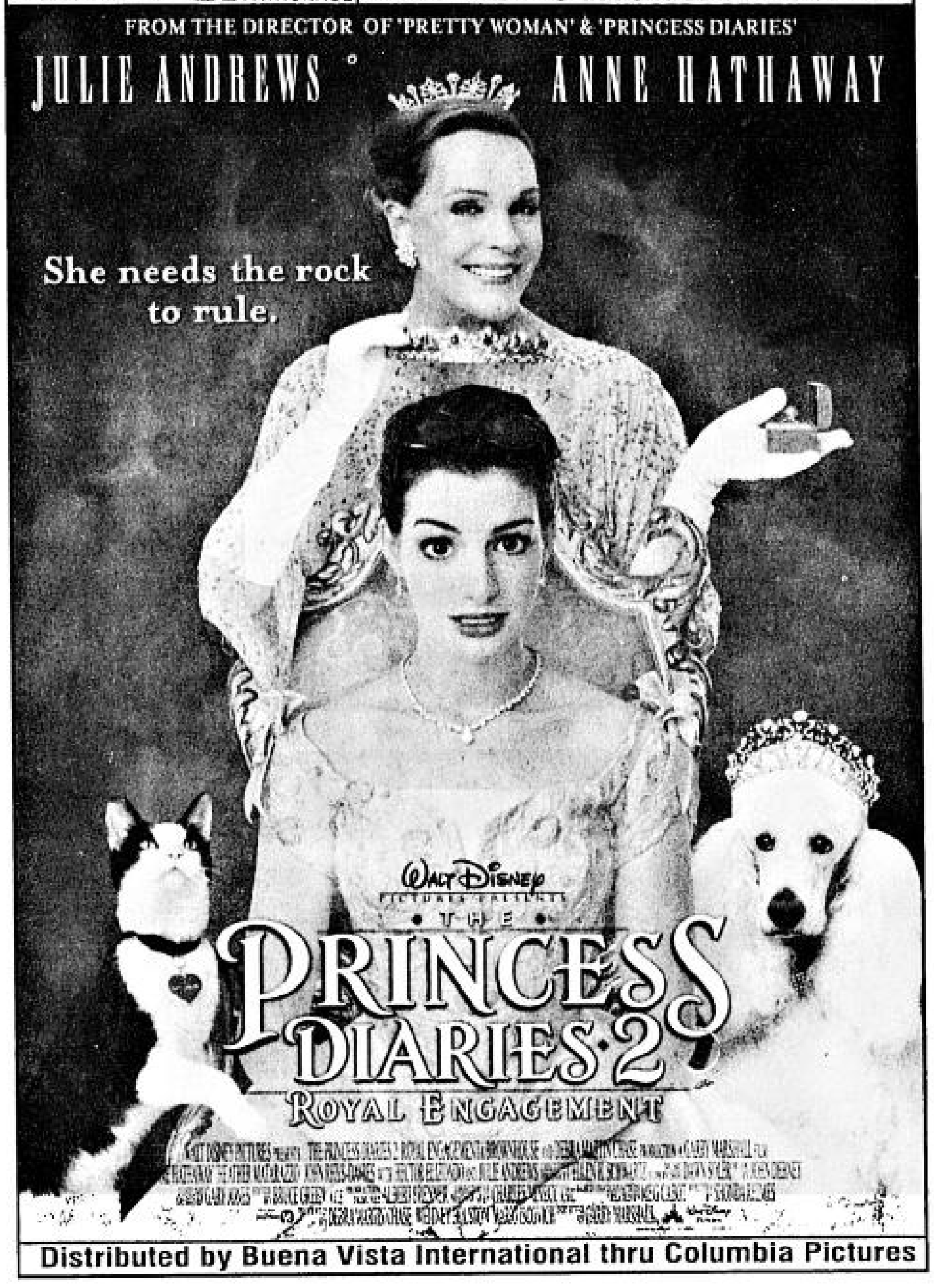
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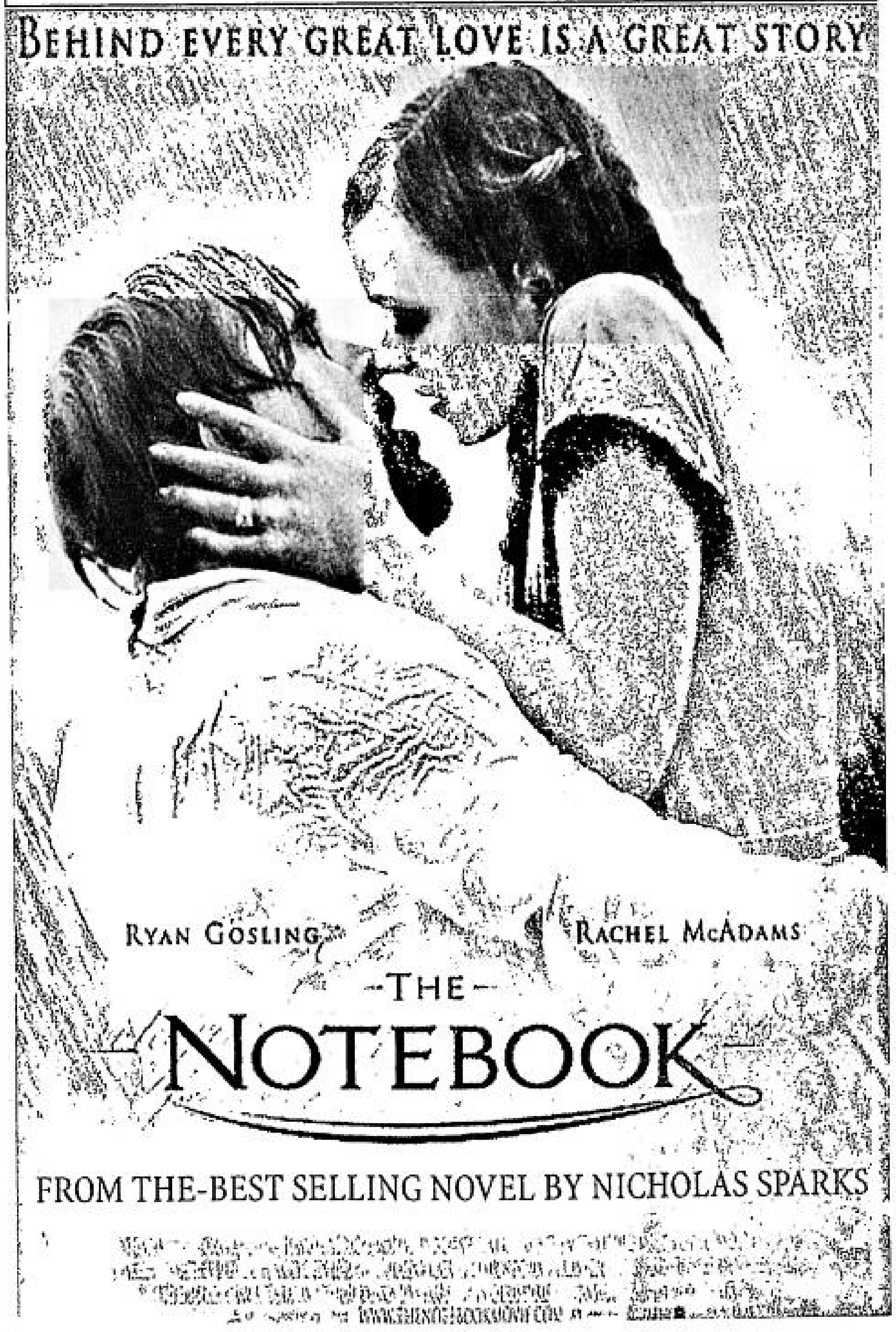
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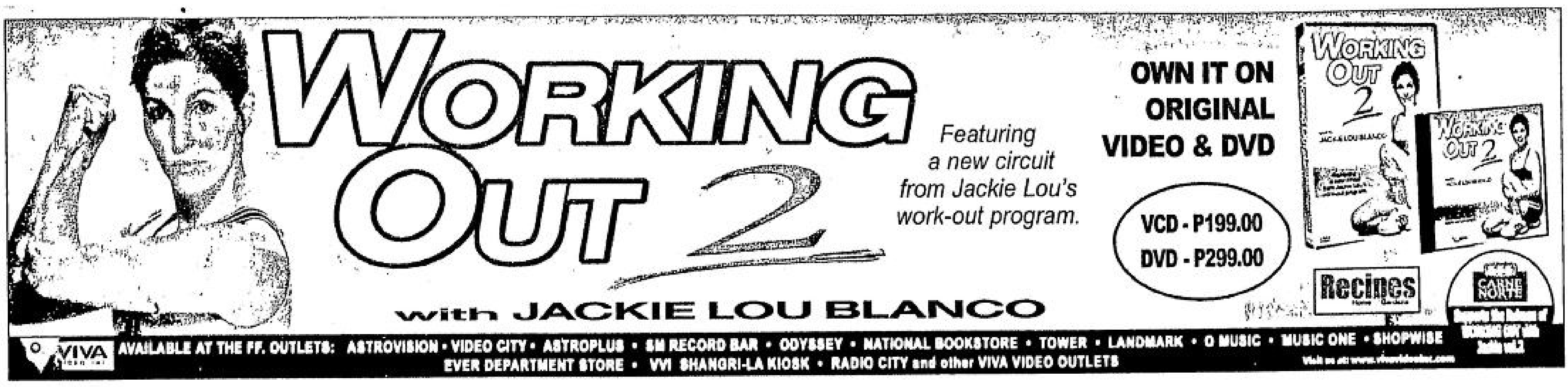
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Bench show . . .

From page A26

Bong Alvarez, fresh from his stint with **Vince Hizon** in the United States Basketball League. Although he learned much playing in the USBL, Bong prefers playing here. "*Hindi ko kaya ang lungkot dun. Kahit* dollars *pa ang bayad, hindi ko pagpapalit ang 'Pinas.*"

I teased him, "Why didn't you find anybody to keep you company in the States?" He smiled, "*Ayoko sa puti. Sa Pinay pa rin ako.*"

He refused to comment about the recent love triangle scandal he got embroiled in. If there's any "love triangle" in his life right now, it's with his three lovely daughters. He proudly showed me their pictures in his wallet and sighed, "*Silang tatlo ang* love of my life, *magkagulu-gulo man ang mundo ko.*"

True Faith

ALL roads lead to Aruba in Libis, Quezon City, every Wednesday for Truefaith's gig. No matter how busy I get I never miss their show at Aruba. Truefaith never ceases to mesmerize me with their music wizardry. So come to Aruba, all you free spirits out there.

Watering Hole

AS A CERTIFIED lunar-powered creature, I have prowled every nightspot in the metropolis but I keep coming back to my original "headquarters," Watering Hole.

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Watering Hole, located at Shangri-la Plaza Mall, will soon be open to serve lunch also at discounted prices.

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com

John Lloyd-Bea movie extended

STAR Cinema's romance-drama-comedy, "Now That I Have You," is on an extended run in theaters across the country.

Starring John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo, it grossed P8 million when it opened last Aug. 11.

The movie is directed by Laurenti Dyogi, who also megged the Star Cinema hit "All My Life," starring Aga Muhlach and Kristine Hermosa. "Now That I Have You" is about two young people who meet and fall in love at the MRT station where they cross paths every day.

It is John Lloyd and Bea's second movie after "My First Romance," where they starred with John Prats and Heart Evangelista.

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Cinema	Movie	Times
CINEMA 1 THX	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30
2	THE VILLAGE	11:40, 2:15, 4.50, 7:25, 10.00
3	BANGKOK HAUNTED	10.20, 12:40, 3.00, 5 20, 7:40, 10.00
4	JANDARA	10 20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10.00
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7.40, 10.00
6	THE STEPFORD WIVES	10:35, 12.50, 3.05, 5.20, 7.35, 9.50
7	CATWOMAN	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7.40, 10:00
8	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10.35, 12 50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
9	COLLATERAL	11:20 2:00, 4:40, 7.20, 10:00
10	A CINDERELLA STORY	12:25 2:20, 4:15, 6 10, 8 05, 10.00

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Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:30
2	JANDARA	10:40, 12:55, 3:10, 5:25, 7.40, 9:50
3	THE VILLAGE	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
4	THE STEPFORD WIVES	11.00, 1.10, 3 20, 5.30, 7:40, 9:50
5	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:10, 12 30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30, 9.50
6	BANGKOK HAUNTED	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8 20, 10.00
7	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	10 10, 12:35, 3.00, 5.25, 7.50, 10.0

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	COLLATERAL	10:45, 1:15, 3:45, 6:15, 9:00
2	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 7:55, 10:30
3	THE VILLAGE	12:15, 2 50, 5:25, 8:00, 10:30
4	BANGKOK HAUNTED	11.10, 1 40, 4 10, 6:40, 9.10
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	10:10, 12:45, 3:20, 5:55, 8.30
6	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10.10, 12.40, 3.10, 5 40, 8.10, 10:30
7	A CINDERELLA STORY	10:50, 12.50, 2 50, 4:50, 6 50, 9.00
8	THE STEPFORD WIVES	10 50, 12.50, 2.50, 4 50, 6 50, 8:50, 10:30

NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW 935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:10, 2:45, 5:20, 8:00
2	GARFIELD	10:30, 12:10, 1:50, 3:30, 5:10, 6:50, 8:30
3	A CINDERELLA STORY	11.00, 1:20, 3:40, 6 00, 8 30
4	COLLATERAL	11 00, 1 25, 3 50, 6 15, 8:40
5	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	12:40, 3.15, 5.50, 8.30
6	THE VILLAGE	10 20, 12.25, 2.30 4:35, 6.40, 8:45
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	10:15, 12:45, 3 15, 5.45, 8:30
8	CATWOMAN	11:00, 1:25, 3.50, 6:15, 8.40

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1 THE VILLAGE
2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
4 KARELASYON

CAINTA 240-4661

1 I, ROBOT
2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 A CINDERELLA STORY
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

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1 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2 THE VILLAGE
3 ELLA ENCHANTED
4 A CINDERELLA STORY
5 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR

LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870

1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 COLLATERAL
3 ELLA ENCHANTED
4 PERLAS
5 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

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1 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
2 KARELASYON
3 THE VILLAGE
4 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
5 ELLA ENCHANTED

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1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 KARELASYON
3 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
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1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
3 DEAD PEOPLE
4 THE VILLAGE
5 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
6 SYLVIA

BACOLOD 441-0458/59

1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 BEAUTIFUL LIFE
3 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
4 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
5 ETERNAL SUNSHINE
6 KAINAN SA HIGHWAY

ILOILO 336-8070/78

1 ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2 NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
3 AROUND THE WORLD IN 80 DAYS
4 THE PRINCE AND ME
5 DEAD PEOPLE
6 ELLA ENCHANTED

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	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR	GUARANTEED SEATS THE STEPFORD WIVES 2 35 4 45, 6 55 9 05 11 15	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
2	THE STEPFORD WIVES	BANGKOK HAUNTED 2: THE UNBORN	GUARANTEED SEATS ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 2 40 4 50, 7 00, 9 10 11 20	DIRTY DANCING 2
3	THE VILLAGE	THE STEPFORD WIVES	GUARANTEED SEATS COLLATERAL 2 00, 4 30, 7 00,9 30	THE UNINVITED
4	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU	GUARANTEED SEATS A CINDERELLA STORY 1 30, 3 30, 5 30, 7 30, 9 30, 11 30	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU
5	A CINDERELLA STORY		GUARANTEED SEATS THE VILLAGE 1 05, 3 10, 5 15, 7 20, 9 25, 11 30	PRINCE & ME

G4 GLORIETTA 4	
1	A CINDERELLA STORY
2	THE VILLAGE
3	GUARANTEED SEATS THE STEPFORD WIVES 11 40, 1 50, 4 00, 6 10, 8 20, 10 30
4	COLLATERAL
5	GARFIELD
6	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR
7	NOW THAT I HAVE YOU

GB1 GREENBELT 1	
1	THE STEPFORD WIVES 1 05, 3 15, 5 25, 7 35 9 45
2	ALIEN VS. PREDATOR 1 10, 3 20, 5 30 7 40, 9 50

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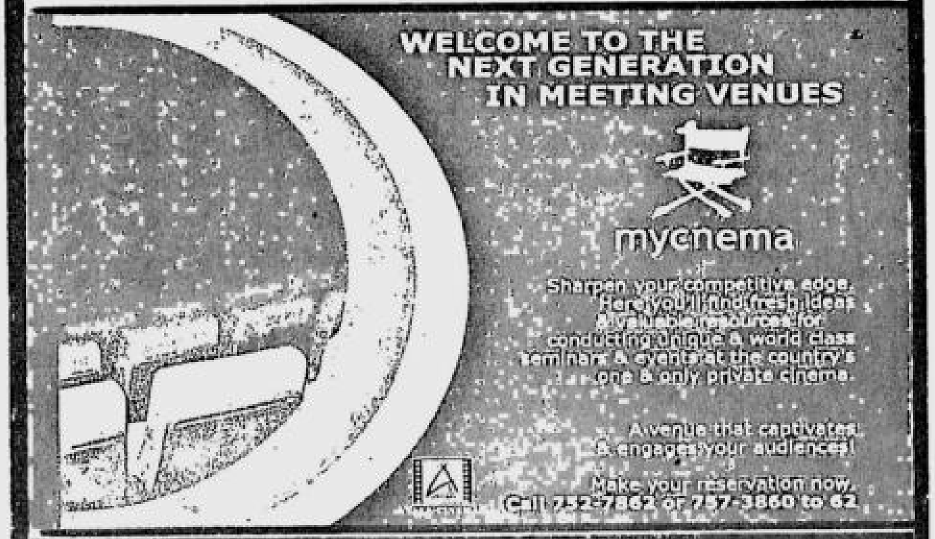
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AYALA MALLS
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Robbie Tan presents new 'proof' vs 'Mother'

By Marinel R. Cruz

WITH THE evidence presented to the Metro Manila Film Festival executive committee, Regal Entertainment matriarch Lily Monteverde "would not be able to deny" that she is behind four of the final eight movies, according to another producer, Robbie Tan of Seiko Films.

Tan last Friday presented "new evidence" to Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando, who is also overall chair of the festival's executive committee. Tan said the new evidence links Monteverde to "Sigaw," which was submitted as an entry of MegaVision, and "Aishite Imasu 1941," said to be a BasFilms Production entry.

Monteverde has insisted that only two movies belong to her: "Que Sera Sera" from Regal Entertainment, and "Mano Po 3" from MAQ Productions, which is known to be a sister company of Regal.

Linked to Regal

Tan said that a check with Gotesco Corp. showed that a reservation was made for the public screening of "Sigaw" in September, "under the account of Regal."

"The official booking report says the reservation was done last June, way before the July deadline of submission of film fest entries," Tan told INQUIRER Entertainment last Saturday.

"Sigaw" is directed by Yam Laranas and stars Richard Guttierrez, Jomari Yllana, Iza Calzado, Angel Locsin, James Blanco and Ronnie Lazaro.

According to Tan, post-production work for "Sigaw" was done at the Roadrunner Network in Quezon City, also under Regal Entertainment's account.

Tan said negatives for "Aishite Imasu" were processed at the LVN Films laboratory in Cubao, Quezon City—again for Regal Entertainment.

"You cannot hide these things," Tan said. "Don't these things say that the movies are connected with Mother Lily? If the film fest executive committee is indeed conducting an investigation, I'm sure they would discover these things."

'Beholden'?

Seiko Films' "Bikini Open" failed to make it to the "Magic 8."

"Are they beholden to Mother Lily?" Tan said of the members of the festival's executive committee. "They remain quiet when everyone is waiting for their move."

Actress Boots Anson-Roa, who is a member of the festival's executive committee, told INQUIRER Entertainment last Saturday that the committee "is looking into the identity of the two production outfits."

Businessman William Lao heads MegaVision, while John S. Suarez is BasFilms vice president for production.

Anson-Roa said the committee is "constantly communicating" with Alonso and with Monteverde.

The committee's other officers are overall vice chair Imelda Aguila, executive director Robert Nacianceno, budget committee heads Edenison Faisan and Rolando Josef, and chair of the board of governors Espiridion Laxa.

Members are Robert Rivera, Ric Camaligan, Manuel Nuqui, Wilson Tieng, Dominic Du, Ng Meng Tam, Leo Martinez, Lito Vergel de Dios, Art Padua and Anson-Roa.

Alonzo's findings

Robbie Tan made his complaint after MLR Films producer, lawyer Joji Alonso, wrote to Fernando on Aug. 4 to say that she suspected that the executive committee adjusted rules and regulations to favor some producers.

> '(The film fest execom) remains quiet when everyone is waiting for its move'

In Alonso's letter to the MMDA on Aug. 19, she said cashier's checks used to pay for the entry fees of the four films "are sequential and issued by the same bank."

Sworn statements submitted by the four films "were all notarized by one Atty. Elisa Barretto" while the "transmittal letters" attached to the screenplays of the four films "were all written on Regal letterheads," Alonso said.

She said a check with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) showed that BasFilms Productions is not at all registered with the commission and therefore "could not validly participate in the 2004 film fest."

The lawyer-producer also pointed out that SEC documents showed MegaVision committed a "major delinquency" when it failed to obtain a copy of the stock and transfer book.

MAQ Productions' SEC registration, she said, was revoked on Nov. 3, 2003 and the company "has absolutely no legal personality to act as a corporation."

Pinay in World Coffee Queen

KAREN Loren Medrano Agustin of the Philippines finished second runner-up in this year's World Queen of Coffee in Houston, Texas.

During the finals held at the Wortham Center's Cullen Theater in Houston on July 31, 5-foot-7 Karen was named "Princesa" or second runner-up. She was also voted Miss Internet.

Karen wore an elegant white long gown created by Julius Jose Ornum. She also wowed the audience in a red, white and blue terno, a creation of Roland Lirio, during the national costume competition.

> **SHOW STOPPER**

Karen was an early favorite, having been heavily applauded in prepageant functions, including the welcome party on July 24, along with the delegates from Colombia who was the eventual winner, El Salvador, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Karen impressed the judges with her extensive knowledge of the Philippine coffee industry and her efforts to help in its promotion locally and internationally.

The 2004 World Coffee Queen (Reina del Café Mundial) title was won by 21-year-old Jeymmy Paola Vargas, a dusky 5-foot-11 psychology student from Cartagena, Colombia.

Vargas, who was the "Virreina" or first runner-up in the most recent Miss Colombia national pageant, succeeded compatriot Johanna Acosta, who held the title World Coffee Queen 2002-2003.

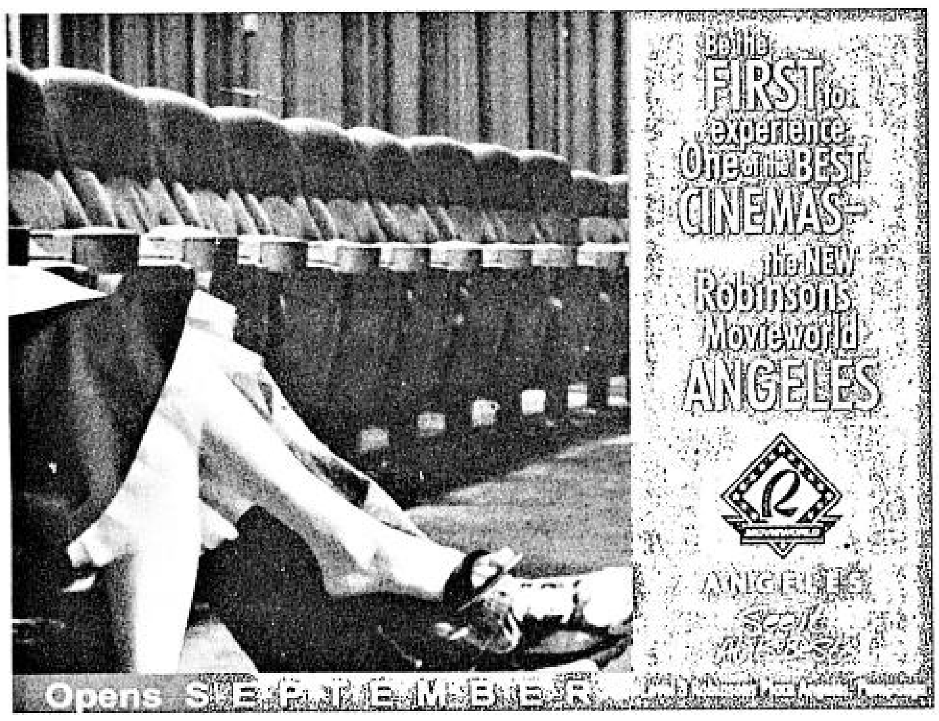
Vargas also won the best national costume award for her flamboyant outfit that highlighted the red, yellow and blue colors of her country's flag.

Named first runner-up to Vargas was Guatemala's Florecita de'Jesus Cobian Azurdia, a 21-year-old law student who was also voted Miss Photogenic. The 5-foot-8 beauty was also Guatemala's bet in the 2002 Miss Earth held in Manila and in last year's Miss Universe held in Panama.

Karen Agustin was sent to the Houston tilt by the Pageant Enthusiasts Guild of the Philippines Inc., the local franchisee of the World Coffee Queen, Miss MesoAmerica and International Queen of Coffee, in cooperation with the Philippines' beauty pageant 'Net-ezine EssentialBeauties.com.

PHILIP
2004
Reina
World Co
VIRREINA-WCQ

COFFEE "expert" Karen Agustin (left) of the Philippines, also voted Miss Internet, with other World Coffee Queen winners from Colombia and Guatemala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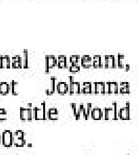
Lack of variety on TV is a disservice to viewers

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



IT'S generally believed that "variety is the spice," but local TV practice has been nay-saying that truism with its increasing preference for the predictable.

This is happening not because our TV people are becoming less creative, but because the intensified ratings war "to the death" between the two top networks now dictates that they match each and every one of their programming gambits with similar, hopefully "neutralizing" formats.

Thus, if a show biz talk show clicks on Network A, Network B feels compelled to quickly whip up its own show biz talk show in pretty much the same timeslot.

As media observer **Paul R. Mortel** notes: "I think Channels 2 and 7 are not being fair to their viewers because they offer practically the same types of shows: 'EK Channel' competes with 'Star Talk,' 'Nginiig' vs 'Kakabakaba,' 'Star in a Million' against 'Pinoy Pop Superstar,' 'CD-Pirated' competes with 'Bitoy's Funniest Videos,' 'Magandang Gabi Bayan' is up against 'Imbestigador,' 'TV Patrol' vs '24 Oras,' 'Victim' against 'Extra Challenge,' 'Maala-ala Mo Kaya' vs 'Magpakailanman,' 'Rated K' competes with 'Mel & Joey'—etc.!

"If they don't end this 'battle royale' of similar shows, they may wake up one day to find out that Channel 5 is already on top of them."

Even if the situation doesn't go *that* far, this lack of variety is a disservice to viewers, because our TV networks have pledged to give them balanced programming, a promise that has been kept more in the breach than the observance.

The loss of variety also robs viewers of their freedom of choice, which is supposed to be a cherished hallmark of "free" television.

This is reprehensible because, in some instances, both competing shows are worth viewing but, since they're in the same timeslot, viewers can view only one of them in full.

It's time that viewers reassert their right to variety and greater choice in televiewing. We should stop meekly accepting the networks' excessively practical and expedient programming ploys, many of which are made at our expense.

The way some TV people look at viewers, they're faceless numbers on a ratings sheet that can be manipulated every which way just to generate the highest viewership figures to defeat the competition.

We understand the TV medium's commercial component and its major role in the vicious network wars, but we should refuse to be treated like mindless, choiceless pawns.

Viewers should remind our TV people that they're supposed to be making shows for *our* enjoyment, not just to use us to boost their dreams of video supremacy.

"Kapamilya"? "Kapuso"? Those blithe slogans can only be truly vivified when the networks restore their focus on our viewing preferences, and variety once again becomes the spice of local television.

Feedback

FROM **Noel Espino**: "From January to August, only a few Tagalog films have been released. Out of the 20 movies I've seen, I'm sad to say that only five of them were local.

"So far, 'Milan' was the only film that provided a good story and great production values. But, with so few films being made, the local movie industry is in trouble.

"What would life be without films? It may become more miserable. *Kaya nagsusumamo ako sa mga* producer at director *na gumawa na po tayo ng matitinong pelikula bago pa maglaho nang tuluyan ang industriya na mahal natin.*"

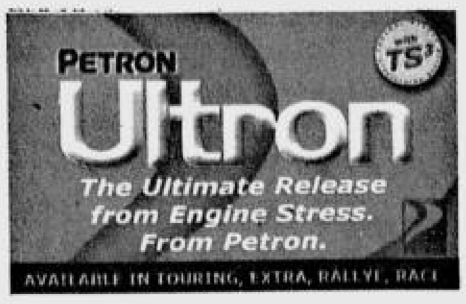
'Inside Africa'

CNN's "Inside Africa" is a half-hour weekly program (12:30 a.m., Sundays) that explores the range and depths of the African continent, bringing features, the latest news, and reports on education, health and the arts.

Hosted by **Tumi Makgabo**, the program has gone beyond the headlines to cover the 2004 South African presidential elections and 10-year anniversary of freedom, the anniversary of Rwanda's 1994 genocide and the African Cup of Nations, and democracy in Angola.

Straight from Willie

WILLIE Revillame recently signed a contract with Information Gateway (PowerGroups Text Service) to provide updates on his show biz activities for interested fans. Text WILLIE to 2213, including your messages to Willie. The service is open to all Smart and Globe subscribers.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Oil firms raise pump prices anew

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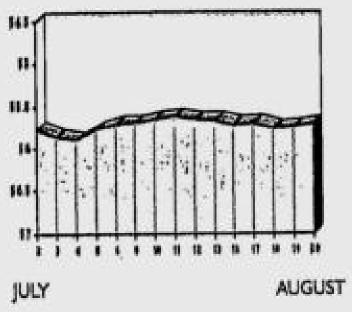

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As of 5 p.m., Aug. 23, 2004

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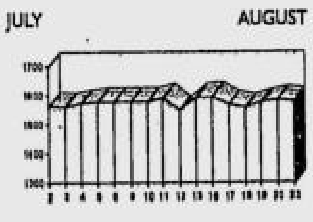
GOLD: $409.5-410.0
per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 23, 2004

STOCK MARKET

Shares close lower



(See stock market report on Page B4)

SHARE prices closed 0.42 percent lower yesterday with some investors choosing to cash in on recent gains in selected stocks, dealers said.

They said the absence of fresh positive leads and warnings from some local economists, that the Philippines may plunge into a financial crisis similar to those experienced by Argentina and Turkey, kept investors cautious.

Investors were also worried about the build-up in inflationary pressures due to high oil prices, which may force the central bank to raise

SHARES/ B4

By Abigail L. Ho

THE SKYROCKETING cost of crude oil has forced some local oil companies to implement another increase in the pump prices of gasoline and other petroleum products.

Barely a week after the most recent oil price hike, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc. and Total (Philippines) Corp. yesterday raised gasoline and diesel prices by 35 centavos a liter.

Flying V followed suit at 12:01 this morning, raising prices of gasoline and diesel by 30 centavos to 35 centavos a liter. Seaoil Petrolem Corp. increased its gasoline and diesel prices by 35 centavos.

The oil firms cited escalating prices in the world market as the reason for the increase.

Since the beginning of the year, gasoline prices have risen nine times by a total of P5.35-P5.50 a liter, while diesel prices have gone up eight times by a total of P4.15-P4.30 a liter.

Ramon Villavicencio, president and chair of new oil player Flying V, earlier said they could no longer shoulder the large increase in the cost of importing refined oil products during the past several days.

The last 30-centavo increase that the company implemented last week was not even enough to cover the previous world market price hikes, he said.

The new historic highs in crude oil prices just days after local oil firms jacked up prices of their gasoline, diesel and kerosene resulted in another burden that the company had to bear, he added.

As of Aug. 20, the spot price for the benchmark Dubai crude soared to a high $41.26 a barrel, driving up the August average to $38.74 a barrel from only $34.65 a barrel in July.

Unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products likewise surged to $55.18 a barrel Friday, pushing the Aug. 1-20 average to $51.90 a barrel. The July average was placed at $46.52 a barrel.

The price of MOPS-based diesel, on the other hand, also shot up to $55.26 a barrel on the same day, further jacking up the Aug. 1-20 average to $51.57 a barrel, more than $5 higher than the $46.25 a barrel average price posted last month.

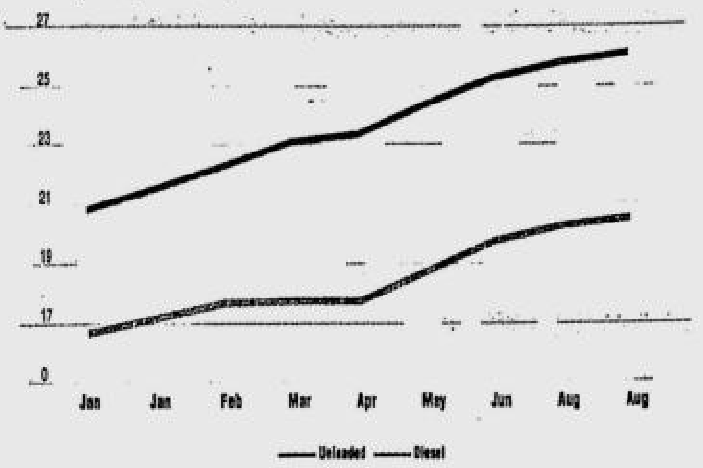
An industry source said that the new oil players' under-recoveries, or world market price increases not reflected in local pump prices, for diesel had spiraled to P4.50 a liter as of last Friday.

While there were some over-recoveries for gasoline, the source said this was not even enough to compensate for the huge losses that the oil firms had to shoulder for diesel.

Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association chair Fernando Martinez said finished product importers have now incurred an under-recovery of P1.20 a liter for gasoline due to the recent spikes in world market prices.

The persistent threats of terrorist attacks on Iraq as well as the perceived global supply disruption in light of the Venezuelan opposition's move to "delegitimize" president Hugo Chavez's win in the referendum more than a week ago continue to drive world prices up.

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES OF UNLEADED GASOLINE &DIESEL
January to August 2004, in peso a liter



Gov't to ask state firms, agencies to cut workforce

By Michelle V. Remo

MALACAÑANG is set to issue an executive order that will direct all government agencies and state-owned companies to streamline their workforce, a move aimed at realizing the government's plan to trim down the bureaucracy and cut expenditure.

Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong said the executive order, which is expected to be issued within the month, would require government entities to dissolve units that are least relevant in their operations.

The Department of Finance earlier said the streamlining would be based on the organization's mandate. This means that departments whose functions do not significantly help in the realization of the mandate will have to be abolished.

The DOF, together with the Department of Budget and Management, is evaluating the mandates of each government-owned and -controlled corporation to determine what recommendations they could give on how the streamlining could be done.

"We will adopt prudent expenditure management program partly by focusing the national government's expenditure on core functions," Amatong said in a speech before members of the American and Canadian chambers of commerce during their joint assembly yesterday.

Amatong, however, allayed fears of loss of jobs by saying the the government's early retirement program would be on a voluntary basis. She reiterated the statement earlier made by President Macapagal-Arroyo that the government would give a "silver parachute," or a decent retirement package, to those who would choose to retire.

The government earlier said reducing its more than a million workforce by 10 percent would be a working target.

The issuance of the executive order will follow the earlier move of Malacañang to dissolve 77 agencies that were operating under the Office of the President.

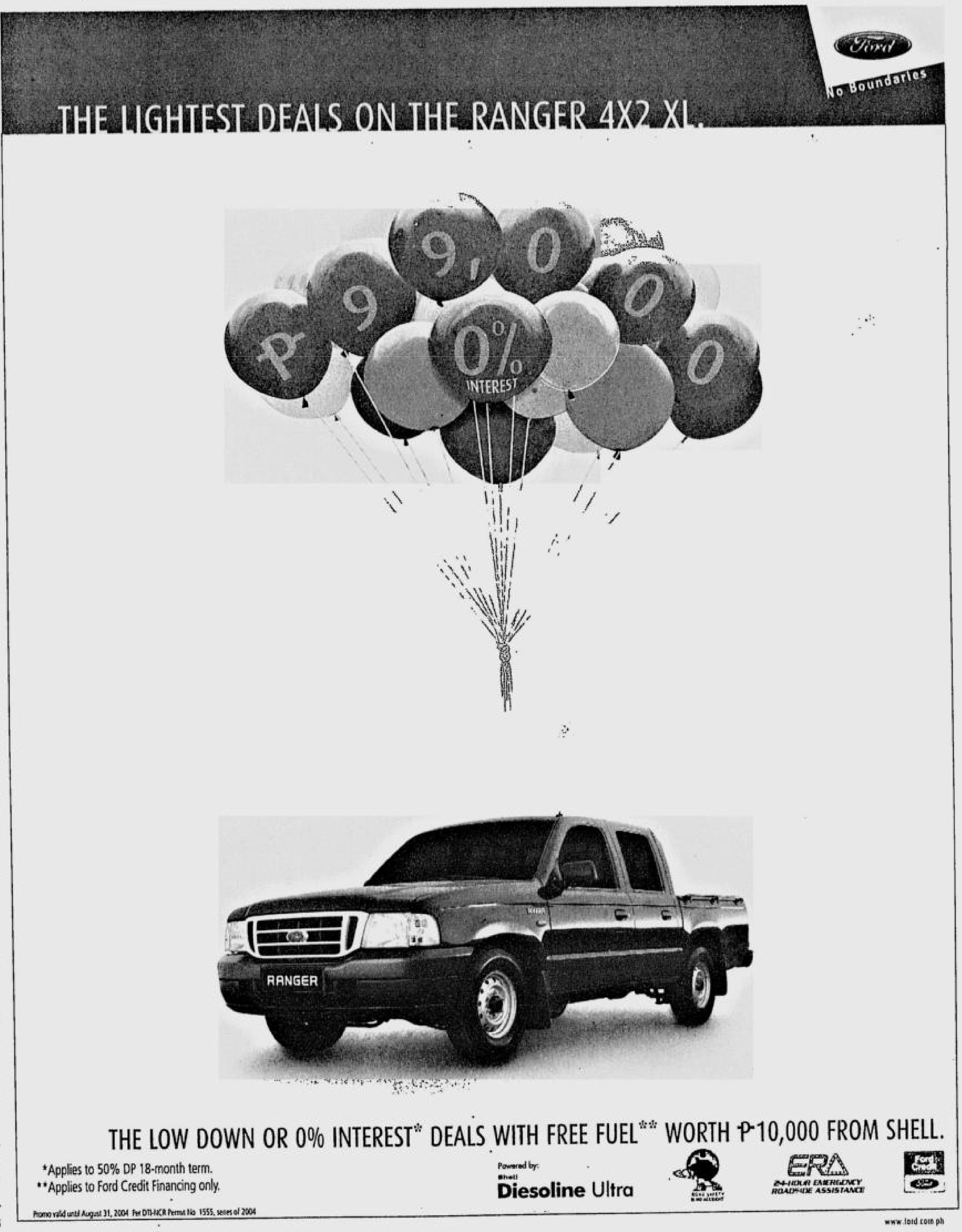
Aside from directing government agencies to streamline their workforce, Malacañang is also reorganizing the supervision of GOCCs to improve their financial performance. Amatong said government agencies were being assigned their own GOCCs to oversee.

Malacañang has earlier transferred the supervision of Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor), the Philippine Estates Authority (PEA) and the Cooperatives Association of the Philippines (CAP) to the DOF.

Tasked to help improve the organizations' financial performance, the DOF will set revenue collection targets for them, and recommend fiscal measures to further improve their operations.

The need to cut expenditure largely through the streamlining program is intended to help ease the government's budget problems and avert a looming fiscal crisis.

The budget deficit, or the gap between higher expenditure and lower revenue, stood at P197.8 billion last year and is expected to be slightly reduced to P197.8 billion by year's end. The government is targeting to totally wipe it out by 2009 or 2010 through measures like expenditure cuts and imposition of new tax measures.



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Infra rid

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

FINALLY, we are getting clear signals from the Neda (National Economic and Development Authority) regarding its main criterion for infrastructure projects.

And that is none other than, well, "politics."

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri, head of Neda, is trying his best to please his different political patron saints over two different infra projects.

One is the suspiciously pricey North Rail, which runs from Caloocan City in Metro Manila to Malolos City in Bulacan. North Rail cost has been pegged at P1 billion per kilometer.

The other is the Sctep (pronounced "sctep"), the expressway that connects Subic and Clark, and which goes all the way to Tarlac.

A political figure from the north, known in my barangay as Mr. Sabit, is said to be pushing for a re-bid of the Sctep contract—via Neri, of course.

As for the North Rail project, Neri is listening to every word (i.e., do it at all cost) of a politico from the north who looks like a Star Wars character.

* * *

NOW, both projects are in Central Luzon, where Gloriaetta comes from. It is not hard to figure out how she feels about the two projects.

While Neri is forcing a re-bid of Sctep's civil works contract, he is mysteriously quiet about the alleged overpricing of the North Rail project.

Yet, of the two projects, the Sctep seems to be aboveboard. The Sctep went through a public bidding; the North Rail did not. Hmm.

Still, Neri is forcing the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, or the BCDA, which is in charge of the Sctep, to undertake a re-bid.

And his reason is, well, during the first bidding, the lowest bidder, a large Japanese group, offered a figure that was above the P20-billion budget for the project.

The multibillion-peso question is, if the BCDA conducts the re-bid, can Neri assure us, the taxpayers, that he can really bring down the cost? Does he think he is God?

* * *

FROM what I heard of the Sctep, the BCDA has thrown up its hands. This is the banner infra project of this infrastructure-challenged cute administration, mind you!

In private, you see, Neri had said that there was no more need for a re-bid since the BCDA was able to cut the cost to near the P20-billion budget.

But it seems that the guy in charge of our economic planning can change his mind faster than we lost our chances of a medal in the current Olympics.

In a recent interview on radio, Neri contradicted what he had said in private, insisting that there should be a re-bid of the Sctep contract.

Now, the BCDA does not want to take the responsibility for whatever damage the re-bidding can do to the project.

According to my info, the BCDA has asked the Neda to supervise the re-bid. If something goes wrong, at least the public knows whom to pinch, *este*, lynch.

* * *

IT IS possible that the project may not push through at all. You see, preparing for a new bidding takes time. Meanwhile, the cost of everything is going up.

It so happens that the Japanese government, through the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, or JBIC, is funding the Sctep prroject.

The amount of the funding has already been fixed. What if the cost for the Sctep goes up substantially as a result of the Neda's re-bid.

Simple: This cute administration must take care of the difference. Of course, it does not have the money. Neri must face the music as a sexy dancer or something.

Why does Neri insist on a re-bid? As I have said, he takes his cue from Mr. Sabit, who is actually after the project, and whatever benefits may accrue to the, well, "sponsor."

I heard that Mr. Sabit now wants to talk directly to the Japanese construction groups bidding for the project. Uh-oh, the Japanese must be nervous by now.

* * *

ANYWAY, that is the same Mr. Sabit who insists on putting his "man" as head of BCDA, trying to get rid of the current BCDA president, Rufo Colayco.

The Sctep, in case you don't know, is Colayco's baby. That is why Mr. Sabit can not make any penetration. Not in the carnal sense, okay!

Colayco commands a great deal of respect in the business community, having been an accomplished corporate executive before joining the government.

I don't know if you can say the same thing about Mr. Sabit. But the thing is, Mr. Sabit is said to have gone directly to the Palace to soil Colayco's name.

The wrong information was fed to the Palace that the Sctep, designed as a straight route between Subic and Clark, would be made to pass through several towns in Bataan.

The implication was that Colayco had favored landed families in those towns. Neri then used the wrong information and told the BCDA to re-design the Sctep. Just like that!

* * *

FOR ME, nothing is wrong if the Sctep were made to pass through populated towns. I mean, isn't that what building roads is all about? You put them where people are, right?

If the value of real estate goes up in those towns, it is even better for the government. It gets more real property taxes. I thought Neri should want that.

The alternative route he proposed to BCDA should pass through mountainous areas. BCDA thus must build stilts over ravines, and tunnels into mountains.

But the engineers hired by the BCDA had designed the Sctep to go around mountains to save on cost, not to mention to give access to more people.

Neri does not want any of those. He wants a re-design, which he thinks can cut the cost for the re-bid. Never mind that time is running out fast.

Originally, Neri had boasted he would need only three to six months for the re-bid. Then he changed his mind to 11 months. Actually, it might take two years.

* * *

FOR one, this cute administration would need the JBIC's concurrence for the re-bid, since it would be JBIC money that would fund the project—re-bid or no re-bid.

Neri has said that the re-bid only takes three JBIC concurrences. Actually there are eight. Each of them can take about 60 days.

Also, Neri has claimed that the tendering of the bids would only take 45 days. Sure! It's just that the law requires at least 60 days for the tendering.

To save time, Neri now wants the technical and the financial bids to be opened at the same time. Only, JBIC has already rejected the idea quite emphatically.

Did the Neda even study its move for the re-bid at all? It seems to me that Neri is pulling facts and figure from out of a hat.

I mean, come on, from where did this cute administration get this guy, anyway? From Congress? No wonder!

* * *

WITH the long delay, comes the increase in project cost. This is always a certainty in construction.

Today, the updated cost for the civil works is estimated at P22.8 billion. What will Neda use for the rebid—P22.8 billion or the original P20 billion?

As it is, the BCDA was able to reduce the asking price of the winning bidder to P22.1 billion—or lower than the official updated cost.

Moreover, BCDA is confident that it can bring the price even closer to the P20 billion original budget. It can thus save time. We do not exactly have a lot of it.

The cost of steel and asphalt (which is oil based) have gone up tremendously.

In a re-bid, BCDA must also spend money to guard the right of way against squatting. Not to mention the financial costs of the delay at P1 billion.

As for those of you planning to invest in Central Luzon because of the Sctep, good luck!

COA wants NTC data on telecom fees

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE COMMISSION on Audit has stepped into the row between the National Telecommunications Commission and the phone companies, and has asked the NTC to provide data on the fees the 10 telecom companies reportedly owe.

Gloria Jornacion, COA state auditor, requested NTC chair Ronald Solis to provide her with a list of paid and unpaid fees this year of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and its subsidiaries, Smart Communications Inc. and Pilipino Telephone Corp.

The NTC wants Piltel to settle the P1.3 billion in overdue regulatory fees, which built up from 1997 to September 2004. Smart, according to the NTC, also had to settle about P100 million in spectrum fee.

The COA also asked for data on the status of Globe Telecom Inc., Innove Communications Inc. (formerly Isla Communications Inc.) Digitel Telecommunications Inc., Bayan Telecommunications Inc., Next Mobile Inc., Multimedia Telephony Inc., and Meridian Telekoms Inc.

Solis said that, by the third quarter, the audit Commission would have resolved the issue of unpaid fees and conflicting interpretation of NTC regulation.

Phone companies are required to pay the NTC supervision and regulatory fee of 50 centavos for every P100 of paid up capital, a permit fee computed at the same ratio, a spectrum users fee and radio station license fee.

The audit commission would be assessing the spectrum users' fee, or the fee on the use of certain radio frequencies.

"The (National Teleccommunications) Commission stands by its computation," Solis said yesterday. "We will send the carriers a collection letter. I am sure they will bring this matter to us on appeal again."

Rogelio Quevedo, legal officer of Smart and Piltel, had asked the NTC to accept P9.1 million in payment for regulatory fees this year. Quevedo stressed, however, that the payment was being made under protest.

"Piltel prays for the Commission to accept said payment for SRF for 2004 and consider such payment to have been made on time and not to charge penalties on Piltel," Quevedo said in his letter to the NTC dated Aug. 6.

Solis said that it was the Supreme Court that had decided in 2001 that regulatory fees should be based on paid capital.

"We are not just talking of paid-up capital, but this is computed based on revenues and premiums," said the NTC chief. "The telcos already elevated this case to the high court years ago, and the Supreme Court had made a stand."

RP poultry export may peak at 1M kilos by yearend

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE RESURGENCE of the avian flu in Asia has pushed up export demand for local poultry products in Japan, South Korea and several European countries.

Additional shipments of local products are reported to be underway as Philippine agribusiness firms, led by San Miguel Corp. and RFM Swift Foods Inc., are now being pressed to produce more than one million kilos to meet the growing demand for chicken products.

Philippine producers have been receiving orders for frozen pieces of dressed chicken from Japan. Chicken exports as of July have topped 400,000 kilos, according to the Poultry Exporters Board.

Trial shipments have already been sent to European countries such as Switzerland and Sweden, local exporters said.

Ruben Pascual, chair of the Poultry Exporters Board, yesterday said during an interview that Philippine chicken products have won new overseas markets, including the United Arab Emirates.

Aside from San Miguel and RFM Swift, Tyson Agro-Ventures Inc. of the Chen family, has also announced plans to begin exporting poultry products by the end of August, Pascual said.

Backyard raisers make up the bulk of the P96-billion poultry industry. But the stringent accreditation imposed by most countries on Philippine exports only allowed big commercial poultry raisers such as SMC, RFM-Swift, Universal Robina Corp. and Vitarich Corp. to corner the export market.

Pascual said that the Philippines took on a significant share of Japan's $300-million chicken import demand, after the avian flu reportedly hit Thailand.

"We are confident that we will remain an export player (even through next year), even after other countries, such as Thailand, have recovered from the avian flu virus and have gone back to exporting," Pascual added.

Also, meat canning firms, led by Century Canning Corp., exported some 87,324 kilos of processed meat products to Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Bahrain and the Middle East from January to June this year.

Department of Agriculture officials said the increase in poultry and processed meat exports reversed the decline posted last year. Some 34,016 kilos were delivered in 2003 compared to the 105.69 metric tons exported for the entire year of 2002.

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Remodeling RP's tax system

By Rene G. Bañez

First of a series

COMMENTARY

TWO big questions that seriously bother government and business today are: How do we reduce the fiscal deficit, which stood at 5.6 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2003? How do we raise the country's tax effort ratio, which was a mere 13.3 percent of GDP in 2003?

Both questions are not just related. They also rely on the type of tax system we must have if we are to discover the right solutions.

A country adopts a tax system mainly to distribute the funding cost of government activities as equitably as possible among the population.

If the cost is bigger than what government could generate, funding the deficit should be a mere band-aid solution.

Otherwise, the government's fiscal position will be compromised and its debt burden will increase.

To address the twin problems of reducing the fiscal deficit and increasing the country's tax effort ratio that have bogged down the country's economy over the years, government must adopt a framework or roadmap on taxation.

The proposed framework will consider the concerns of both government and business.

Grim realities

Acceptance of certain realities is indispensable if we are to discover relevant and realistic solutions.

Reality No. 1. The revenue and deficit problems are systemic in nature.

A hodgepodge approach, such as creating new taxes and/or increasing the rates, may prove incorrect and difficult to correct once implemented.

We have seen this in the past. More often than not, they only worsened the problems instead of solving them.

Reality No. 2. The country's total debt now stands at over P4 trillion, about 80 percent of which are owed to foreign creditors. This aggravates problems as it exposes government to volatile foreign currencies.

Reality No. 3. National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) data show poverty incidence at 33 percent and 34 percent of the population in 1997 and 2000, respectively.

This is a social volcano waiting to explode unless we, as a nation, are committed and focused in reducing it.

Reality No. 4. The bloated bureaucracy eats up a big portion of the national budget. Does government want to remain the biggest employer in the country, or become a model service provider? It has to make a choice to improve its efficiency and effectiveness.

Reality No. 5. The government's expenditure program is grossly misunderstood and mismanaged, either due to lack of proper administration or corrupt practices.

Thus, a typical Filipino taxpayer would rather not pay his taxes correctly.

Undeniably, TAXES are the SOLUTION to our fiscal dilemma.

Conversely, it appears that TAXES may also be part of THE PROBLEM.

Fiscal milieu

Before government can evaluate the soundness and feasibility of any proposed tax measure, it must first examine the country's fiscal situation and relate it to tax reform measures undertaken by past administrations.

In the early 1970s, the Philippines was in an economic crisis, reportedly due to the reckless spending of government funds.

Martial law was declared on the pretext that the country was faced with revolutions from both the left and the right.

The US Congress Library chronicled the financial situation after the declaration of martial law as follows:

"In the beginning, Marcos' efforts to create a "New Society" were supported widely by the business community, both Filipino and foreign, by Washington, and, de facto, by the multilateral institutions. Foreign investment was encouraged: an export-processing zone was opened; a range of additional investment incentives was created, and the Philippines projected itself onto the world economy as a country of low wages and industrial peace. The inflow of international capital increased dramatically.

A general rise in world raw material prices in the early 1970s helped boost the performance of the economy.

Real GNP grew at an average of almost 7 percent a year in the five years after the declaration of martial law, as compared with approximately 5 percent annually in the five preceding years.

The public sector played a much larger role in the 1970s, with the extent of government expenditures in GNP rising by 40 percent in the decade after 1972. To finance the boom, the government extensively resorted to international debt, hence the characterization of the economy of the Marcos era as "debt driven."

"In the latter half of the 1970s, heavy borrowing from transnational commercial banks, multilateral organizations, the United States and other countries masked problems that had begun to appear on the economic horizon with the slowdown of the world economy.

By 1976, the Philippines was among the top 100 recipients of loans from the World Bank and was considered a "country of concentration."

Its balance of payments problem was solved and growth facilitated, at least temporarily, but at the cost of having to service an external debt that rose from $2.3 billion in 1970 to more than $17.2 billion in 1980.

A financial scandal in January 1981 in which a businessman fled the country with debts of an estimated P700 million required massive amounts of emergency loans from the Central Bank of the Philippines and other government-owned financial institutions to some 80 firms.

The growth rate of GNP fell dramatically, and from then the economic ills of the Philippines proliferated.

In 1980, there was an abrupt change in economic policy, related to the changing world economy and deteriorating internal conditions, with the Philippine government agreeing to reduce the average level and dispersion of tariff rates and to eliminate most quantitative restrictions on trade, in exchange for a $200 million structural adjustment loan from the World Bank.

Whatever the merits of the policy shift, the timing was miserable.

Exports did not increase substantially, while imports increased dramatically.

The result was growing debt-service payments; emergency loans were forthcoming, but the hemorrhaging did not cease.

It was in this environment in August 1983 that President Marcos' foremost critic, former Sen. Benigno Aquino, returned from exile and was assassinated.

The country was thrown into an economic and political crisis that resulted eventually, in February 1986, in the ending of Marcos' 21-year rule and his flight from the Philippines.

In the meantime, debt repayment had ceased.

Real GNP fell more than 11 percent before turning back up in 1986, and real GNP per capita fell 17 percent from its high point in 1981.

In 1990, per capita real GNP was still 7 percent below the 1981 level."

Roller-coaster ride

The Philippines experienced a budget surplus only four out of 30 years.

Between 1981 and 2002, budget surpluses were recorded only from 1994 to 1997.

This resulted in a budget deficit that increased from just 1.9 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 1998 to about 4.7 percent in 2003.

For government to meet urgent developmental needs and propel economic growth, it must increase public expenditures.

However, in view of the buildup of debt service costs, the only way this can be done is to raise revenue collection.

Each year, interest payments have grown faster than revenues.

In 1994 (the first of four years of a fiscal surplus), the government spent P17 in interest payments for every P100 of public revenues, according to data from the Congressional Planning and Budget Office. For projects and other needs (classified as "development funds"), it spent P31.

But in 2003, interest payments grew to P28, while development funds shrank to just P19.

This shows that there was deterioration in development funds from 1994 to 2003 by 39 percent, but a hefty growth in interest payments by 65 percent.

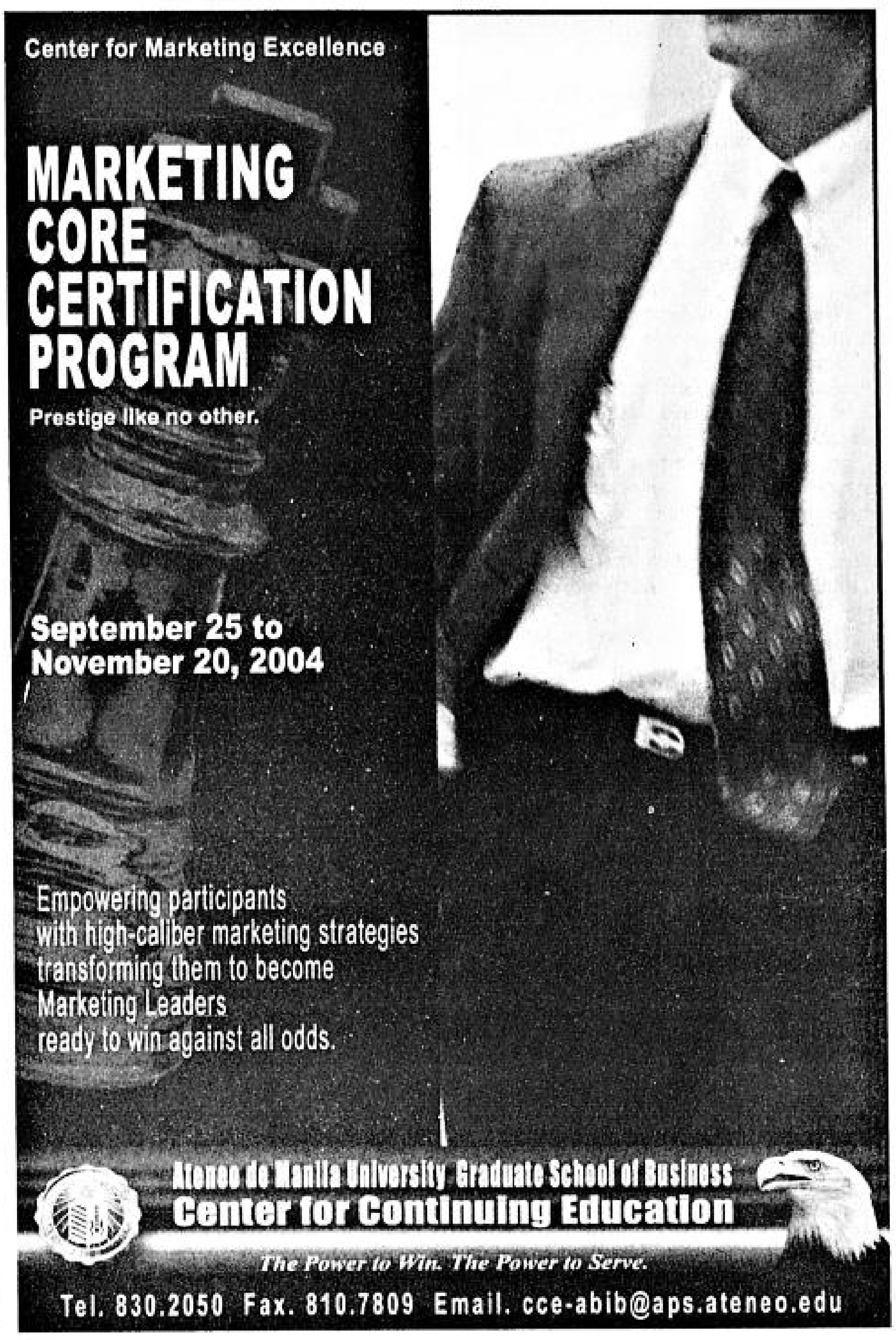
These figures strongly suggest that government needs to increase its revenue generation by as much as 3 percent of GDP, and do it quickly.

If debt service costs grow faster than revenues, tax collections must be increased just to service past debts.

As this provides no improvement in public services, it becomes politically difficult to do, while the debt problem could quickly escalate into a financial crisis.

To be continued

(The author, a former commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, delivered this paper at the Ateneo Law School, where he is a professor of tax law.



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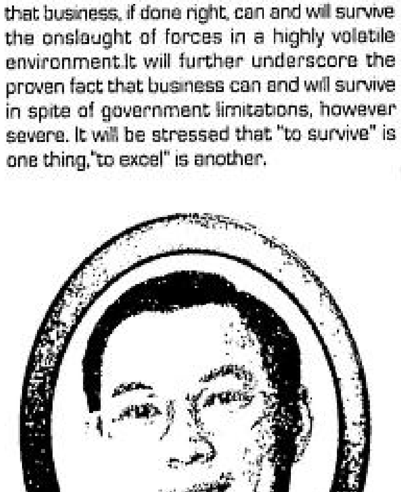

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Recipé for disaster

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I WENT to visit a friend in hospital over the weekend. I haven't seen him for several months and I was shocked because he had lost a stone. I found out later that the doctor had taken it from his kidney. He looked well and unworried about the forthcoming operation. He already had three. Anyway, to cut a long story sideways, he opted for local anesthesia (the missing daughter of Czar Nicholas). The doctor gave him a lumbar puncture, which was painless because the doctor was actually a lumberjack in Canada. While under the anaesthetic, my friend swears he heard the following conversations:

"I am sure I put in a new oxygen cylinder this morning. I hope this one is not empty.

Who tore page 27 out of the operating manual?

If this is the spleen, then what's that?

I think we should save that piece for the autopsy.

What do you mean, he wasn't in for a sex change?"

I am sure that he imagined it, but I was a bit shaken when the doctor asked the nurse to take his temperature and she said, "why? Is it missing?" He remembers the doctor taking out a buzz saw used for cutting logs. Then the assistant said, "he's not an HMO patient, he's paying," so he reached for a scalpel.

The doctor promised him he would have him back on his feet in two weeks. He was as good as his word. My friend had to sell his car to pay the bill. On my way out, the receptionist asked me if I was an organ donor. "Yes," I said. "I gave an old piano to the Salvation Army last year." She looked bewildered. It must be my British accent.

While I was in the hospital, I decided to have a checkup. After carefully examining the results of my ultrasound, MRI, blood tests, urine, EKG and DNA, the doctor told me to take one green pill when I wake up, with a large glass of water. Then at lunch, I have to take a blue pill, with a large glass of water. Finally, at dinner, I have to take a red pill, again with a large glass of water.

"What on earth is the matter with me?" I asked nervously.

"Nothing serious. You are not drinking enough water."

* * * *

THE DIVIDEND season is just about finished and all the leaders produced results that were better than the corresponding quarter of last year. In the case of TEL, GLO and AC, they were far above 2,003, but the figures had been anticipated by the investment analysts, so there was little movement. This is normal because stocks move up ahead of the results, thereby discounting them. So there is little response from the stock market. That is why I wrote in previous articles that you should BUY about two weeks before the figures and SELL the day before. This works most of the time.

One new feature that I am adding to my daily newsletter is that every Friday, I will make out a list of company results due in the next two weeks. This will give readers time over the weekend to plan their strategy for those companies that are volatile. For the first time, I will include second and third liners using a different system of analysis as the degree of risk does not apply to companies which trade less than P1 million a day. But put only your lunch money into them, not your life savings.

The price of oil is $49 and could well hit $50 before my article is printed. In all three previous recessions, excluding the 9/11 attack, a peak in oil prices preceded them. However, it will not necessarily happen this time. Although the current price is the highest ever recorded, if you adjust for 25 years of inflation, the current price is well below that ruling in the late '70s and early '80s. Although there are more Americans driving cars than 25 years ago, the automobile manufacturers have been making cars lighter and engines that are more fuel -efficient.

So the US is less dependent on imported oil now than 25 years ago and this factor alone should not be sufficient to derail the US economy, though obviously it will reduce consumer spending and therefore reduce GDP.

The other important factors are the sabotage of Iraqi oil, which reduced shipments from 1.8 million barrels a day to 1 million. There are worries about the future of YUKOS, a Russian company with huge tax debts that produces two million barrels a day. There is the possibility of a lockout in Norway, another oil producer and there has been shooting in Venezuela, a major oil producer.

I do not understand why the US does not develop its known large oil deposits in Alaska. Admittedly, it takes years between drilling and pumping, but the long-term position can only get worse unless they produce transport that will run on solar energy or fuel cells. So far, development in both areas has been disappointingly slow.

Why will the situation get worse? Opec is pumping flat out and so is Russia which, together with Saudi Arabia, produces 20 million barrels a day. There are no more reserves immediately available, but demand from China and India is rising rapidly and they have a combined population of 2.2 billion. Worse still, they are starting from a low base so consumption from these two countries can only keep increasing for many years to come.

In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is the main source of supply, and you can be sure that if there is any way of sabotaging its production, al-Qaida will find it. So far, we have been lucky but in a world where Iran has just tested a long-range missile, and North Korea is producing enriched uranium, we live in an increasingly dangerous world. Stephen Hawking, the renowned cosmologist, said he did not think that civilization would survive this millennium. I think that he is wildly optimistic.

Because of the record oil price, our import bill rose by 18 percent, the largest jump since February 2003. This resulted in a trade deficit of $142 million last month and $1.2 billion for the first half of 2004. Add to this, a BIR deficit of P6 billion in the first half, overspending in the election campaign, and a 6-percent inflation rate, which is expected to rise further, and you have the recipe for an explosive situation.

Subsequent to writing this article, I read that the University of the Philippines' economics department has predicted dire trouble within two years, if nothing is done soon. I totally agree with them. The Senate had better stop debating Smokey Mountain and pass some vital tax measures before they do on vacation next month. I still believe that the pork barrel should be abolished and the legislature be paid according to the number of tax-raising bills they pass. Then we might get some action. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

Exchange seeks creation of market integrity board

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange (PSE) is proposing the creation of a special body to review decisions made by the PSE unit monitoring broker activities on issues involving brokers' compliance with stock exchange rules, sources at the Securities and Exchange Commission said.

The SEC, the same sources said, was awaiting the final structure of this proposed body, to be called the Market Integrity Board, which was expected to be completed by the end of this month.

The board will be composed of private and public sector representatives. It will be tasked to ensure the impartiality of the decisions made by the PSE's compliance and surveillance group, particularly on violations of stock market rules.

Under the PSE's plan, the integrity board may initially have as members a retired Supreme Court justice, a retired SEC commissioner and a broker, the sources said.

While the structure of the integrity board has yet to be finalized, there are already proposals to increase the broker-representatives to two, including an independent director.

Once the final proposal is submitted, a memorandum of understanding will be signed by the PSE and the SEC.

The sources said that should the proposed body be approved, the plan to spin off the PSE's compliance and surveillance group would no longer be necessary.

The SEC had asked the PSE earlier to identify the steps it would take to ensure the independence of its CSG, which monitors the compliance of listed firms and brokers with the stock exchange rules.

The PSE board earlier decided to retain the CSG within the organization "and to strengthen the group to maintain its independence."

The CSG is considered to be the PSE's police unit which, by nature, should be free from the influence of brokers and trading participants in the performance of its duties.

The SEC allowed the exchange to review and decide on whether to spin off its monitoring units—the CSG and the Disclosure Department—provided they complied with the independent audit, compliance and surveillance requirements of the law.

The PSE said it would review the current structures and operations of these units under a memorandum of understanding signed with the SEC.

If these departments were proven not compliant with the independence requirement of the law, the next option would be to spin off the CSG into a separate entity.

Under a memorandum of understanding with the SEC, the PSE through its audit, compliance and surveillance units will also conduct its regular audit of trading participants to ensure compliance with securities regulations.

The PSE will also monitor and supervise the compliance by listed companies with its disclosure requirements to prevent insider trading and other market fraud. It will also impose necessary penalties for those found violating the rules.

Arroyo retires as president of RCBC Securities

PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange chair Alicia Rita Arroyo is retiring as president of the Yuchengco-owned RCBC Securities Inc., as she plans to devote more of her time to the stock exchange, very informed sources told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Source close to Arroyo said she was scheduled to file her letter of retirement yesterday with RCBC.

Sources stressed that the move was not because of any rift with fellow Makati broker Vivian Yuchengco.

The decision was also prompted by the recent election of her husband Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo, younger brother of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, as representative of the fifth district of Negros Occidental, which meant new duties for the PSE chair as wife of a congressman.

Sources added that Arroyo would keep her post as a director of RCBC Securities. Before she was named president of the bank's affiliate brokerage in 1995, Arroyo was the general manager of RCBC International Finance Ltd., a licensed deposit taking company in Hong Kong. She was also a director of RCBC Investments Ltd. in Hong Kong during that period.

Arroyo is a business administration and accountancy graduate of the University of the Philippines. She holds a master's degree in management, majoring in finance, marketing and economics at the J.L. Kellogg Graduate School of Management Northwestern University in Illinois. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Public warned of resurgence of boiler room operations

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission (SEC) said it would again issue a warning to the public against "boiler room" operations.

The move was prompted by reports that this modus operandi had resurfaced, after it was practically wiped out through the SEC's clampdown operations.

Boiler room operators are those that sell unlicensed securities to investors through the use of high pressure tactics or misleading information.

The SEC had issued cease and desist orders on boiler room operators, on grounds that they did not have the licenses to sell securities.

SEC Commissioner Joselia Poblador said the agency was alerted of the resurgence of such activities in Cebu, Pampanga, Davao and in Pasig, Metro Manila.

"Somebody from Cebu brought it to our attention. Some of their victims are foreigners," Poblador said without identifying the complainant.

SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said some of these boiler room operators were pretending to be call centers. She however stressed that the SEC was not running after call centers.

In a clampdown drive against "boiler room" operators that started in 2000, the SEC has issued CDOs for fraudulent securities deals on Goldberg & Partners, United Capital Management, Oxford International Management, Wells Chadwick, Barclays Group Inc. & New World Financial Group, Sherman Brothers Management, Bradford Kempner Management Services, Muller & Sons Securities, Dukes & Company Securities, Knowie & Sachs, Saxon & Swift, Newport Pacific Securities, Worldwide Investors, Asia World Online, and Bradshaw Global Asset Management.

Last year, the SEC asked the Department of Justice to assign a prosecutor to handle the cases involving investment scams that were being filed with the commission. The SEC earlier filed complaints against several large operators of Ponzi-type or pyramiding operations, a get-rich-quick type of scheme.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Shares close lower

From page B1

its interest rates, dealers said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index shed 6.66 points to 1,576.18. It moved between 1,571.20 and 1,585.65.

Volume rose to 3.26 billion shares worth P441.5 million from 2.09 billion shares worth P506.4 million last Friday.

Losers led gainers, 35 to 27, while 43 stocks were unchanged.

The all-shares index was down 6.08 points at 1,004.80. The commercial-industrial index fell 9.61 to 2,513.60 and property was down 2.65 at 513.80. Mining retreated 73.57 to 1,811.83, but oil was up 0.10 at 1.75. Banking and financial services shed 1.52 to 458.35. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 23, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	263,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	41	41	41	41	198,600
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	41.5	41.5	41.5	41.5	25,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.46	200,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	25.5	26	25	25.5	182,000
Philippine National Bank	23	23	23	23	200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	12,000
Security Bank Corp.	21.5	21.5	21.5	21.5	11,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24	24	24	5,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	200,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2225	2225	2225	2225	50
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	200,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1510	1510	1510	1510	40
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	20.25	20.5	20.25	20.5	34,500
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.64	0.64	860,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	865	870	855	865	50,310
Ipeople Inc.	1.4	1.42	1.38	1.42	125,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.037	0.037	0.037	0.037	200,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.46	2.46	2.42	2.42	16,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.55	2.6	7,203,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	100,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1275	1275	1270	1275	86,380
Ivantage Corp.	0.69	0.73	0.67	0.7	19,100,000
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	35,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	22,000
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.25	23.5	23.75	341,000
Petron Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.48	2.5	3,813,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.12	2.16	2.12	2.16	18,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.14	1.16	1.12	1.12	1,263,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.12	2.2	37,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	4.1	4.2	4.1	4.2	7,278,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.37	0.37	1,710,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	7,000
Union Cement Corp.	1.76	1.78	1.76	1.78	1,795,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	26	26	25	25	88,400
RFM Corp.	0.74	0.78	0.74	0.76	90,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	260,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	57.5	57	57	63,500
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70	69.5	70	2,500
Vitarich Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	560,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	25,000,000
Ayala Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	505,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	187,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.006	18,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	25	25	24.75	25	117,800
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.51	0.52	0.5	0.5	4,870,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.145	3,630,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.22	0.21	0.215	450,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	1.7	1.88	1.68	1.82	20,325,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	19,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	25	25.5	25	25	411,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.07	0.07	9,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.58	1.62	1.48	1.48	743,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	110,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.44	1.54	1.36	1.44	705,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	200,000
Medco Holdings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	180,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	1,368,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.36	0.38	0.35	0.35	54,000,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.02	284,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.14	250,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	40,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	60,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Jardine Davies Inc.	36.5	36.5	36.5	36.5	6,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	20,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	22,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.71	6,390,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	220,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	45,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,500
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.2	6.2	6.2	6.2	18,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.3	512,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	60,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.245	0.245	0.245	0.245	530,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.245	2,070,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.96	0.96	0.95	0.95	7,330,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	500,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	1,270,000
SM Development Corp.	1	1	1	1	130,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.7	7,085,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.005	0.0055	0.005	0.005	289,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	71,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	20,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	2,040,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	4,680,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.014	0.015	700,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.015	0.016	868,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.004	0.0038	0.0038	122,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	3,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	900,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.43	910,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.004	0.0046	0.004	0.0044	670,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0046	0.0042	0.0046	260,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3.05	3.55	3	3	523,000

DISCLOSURES

INTERPHIL Laboratories Inc. purchased 3,000 of its shares at P1.90 per share pursuant to its share buyback program.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Realty & Holdings Corp. said only Metrobank had filed a notice of appeal with regards to the company's court-approved rehabilitation. With this, the company will file a motion for execution with the court.

* * *

PCI Leasing and Finance Inc. purchased 816,500 of its shares at P1.34 per share pursuant to the firm's shares buy-back program.

* * *

BANK of the Philippine Islands confirmed that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had approved the bank's accreditation as a third party securities custodian.

* * *

BANCO de Oro said the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas had approved the bank's cash dividend of P0.50 per share.

* * *

VIVANT Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 30 at the Cebu Country Club, Cebu City. Stockholders of record as of Aug. 30 are entitled to notice of and vote at the meeting.

* * *

PNOC Exploration Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Sept. 24, 8 a.m. at the PNOC Mini Theatre, Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig. Stockholders of record as of Sept. 13 are entitled to notice of and vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

August 23, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.81214976	1.000000	55.7590
Japan	Yen	0.007437	0.009157	0.5106
United Kingdom	Pound	1.475676	1.817000	101.3141
Hongkong	Dollar	0.104132	0.128218	7.1493
Switzerland	Franc	0.649356	0.799552	44.5822
Canada	Dollar	0.625501	0.770179	42.9444
Singapore	Dollar	0.475804	0.585857	32.6668
Australia	Dollar	0.587663	0.723589	40.3466
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.1543	2.652590	147.9058
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.216561	0.266652	14.8682
Brunei	Dollar	0.474414	0.584146	32.5714
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000088	0.000108	0.0060
Thailand	Baht	0.019598	0.024131	1.3455
UAE	Dirham	0.221113	0.272257	15.1808
Euro	Euro	1	1.231300	68.6561
ArgentinaPeso	0.270041	0.332502	18.5400	
Brazil	REAL	0.272808	0.335909	18.7299
Denmark	Kroner	0.134448	0.165546	9.2307
India	Rupee	0.017579	0.021645	1.2069
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.213752	0.263193	14.6754
Mexico	New Peso	0.071748	0.088343	4.9259
New Zealand	Dollar	0.546167	0.672495	37.4976
Norway	Kroner	0.120976	0.148958	8.3057
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013831	0.017030	0.9496
South Africa	Rand	0.124372	0.153139	8.5389
Korea	Won	0.000704	0.000867	0.0483
Sweden	Kroner	0.108771	0.133930	7.4678
Syria	Pound	0.022479	0.027678	1.5433
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LEGAL NOTICE

Extrajudicial settlement among heirs of Angelina P. Alejo made & entered into by & among ; Lariza P. Alejo, Rolando P. Alejo, Maria P. Alejo, Liza P. Alejo, Leah P. Alejo, Rico P. Alejo of 144 Poblacion, Kawit, Cavite (PDI-Aug. 17, 24 & 31, 2004)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late AH WAH has been extrajudicially settle among the heirs under Doc. No. 276, Page No. 56, Book No. XXXII, Series of 2004, of Notary Public Sofronio C. Untalan Jr. of the City of Makati. (PDI-August 17, 24, 31, 2004)

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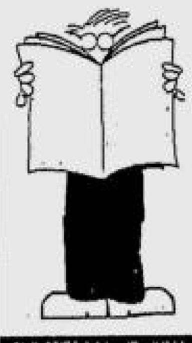

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PROVINCE OF ISABELA
Ilagan, Isabela
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela through its Bids and Awards Committee is inviting interested Manufacturers, Wholesalers and Exclusive Distributors/Suppliers in the pre-eligibility and to participate in the sealed competitive bidding for the procurement of various Office Supplies, Janitorial Supplies, Electrical Supplies, Veterinary Medicines & Supplies, Agricultural Supplies, Janitorial Services & Security Services and Motor Vehicles for the different Provincial Office and District Hospitals in the Province of Isabela.

BIDDING ACTIVITIES:

Availability of Pre-Bid Requirements	-	Starting August 30, 2004, Mondays to Fridays 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Provincial Services Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Deadline of Submission of Requirements	-	September 15, 2004 at the Office of the Provincial General Services Office, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Pre-Bid Conference	-	September 22, 2004 at 10:00 a.m. at Governor's Office Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Bidding	-	October 8, 2004
	-	10:00 a.m. - Motor Vehicle
	-	10:30 a.m. - Office, Janitorial and Electrical Supplies
	-	11:00 a.m. - Veterinary Medicines and Agricultural Supplies
	-	2:00 p.m. - Janitorial & Security Services at the Governor's Office Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela
Source of Fund	-	Approved Budget for the Contracts Php 9.7 million charged against the General Fund of the Province of Isabela

Complete sets of bid proposal/forms may be acquired from the Provincial General Services Office by the eligible suppliers/dealers after payment of non-refundable Bidding fee of Php 2,000.00 and Governor's Permit Fee of Php 500.00 at the Provincial Treasurers Office. At the date of bidding, sealed bids in triplicate forms shall be submitted with refundable bidders bond equivalent to 1% percent of the total bid. Bidders bond shall be in the form of cash only. No personal checks shall be accepted as bidders bond.

(Sgd.) MARIA GRACIA CIELO M. PADACA
Provincial Governor

(PDI - Aug. 24 & 31, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ISABELA
ILAGAN

OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

The Provincial Government of Isabela through its Bids and Awards Committee is inviting interested Manufacturers, Wholesalers and Exclusive Distributors/Suppliers in the pre-eligibility and to participate in the sealed competitive bidding for the procurement of various Drugs and Medicines, Surgical, Laboratory, X-ray and Dental Supplies and I.V. Fluids for the different District Hospitals in the Province of Isabela.

BIDDING ACTIVITIES:

Availability of Pre-Bid Requirements – Starting August 27, 2004, Mondays to Fridays 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Office of the Provincial General Services, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela

Deadline of Submission of Requirements – September 03, 2004 at the Office of the Prov'l General Services, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela.

Pre-Bid Conference – September 06, 2004 at 10:00 am at Governor's Office Mini-Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela.

Bidding – September 20, 2004 at 10:00 am – at the Governor's Mini Conference Hall, Capitol, Alibagu, Ilagan, Isabela.

Source of Fund – Approved Budget for the contract is Php50,000,000.00 charged against the General Fund of the Province of Isabela

Complete set of bid proposal/forms may be acquired from the Prov'l General Services Office by the eligible suppliers/dealers after payment of non-refundable Bidding fee of Php2,000.00 and Governor's Permit Fee of Php500.00 at the Prov'l Treasurer's Office. At the date of bidding, sealed bids in triplicate forms shall be submitted with refundable bidders bond equivalent to 1% percent of the total bid. Bidders bond shall be in the form of cash only. No personal checks shall be accepted as bidders bond.

(Sgd.) **MARIA GRACIA CIELO M. PADACA**
Provincial Governor

(PDI–Aug. 24 & 31, 2004)

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Bankers, brokers real estate seminar

THE REAL Estate Brokers Association of the Phils. (Rebap) Quezon City Chapter presents on Sept. 10 to 11, its Continuing Education Program (CEP) especially for bankers and brokers to be held at Mondragon House, Makati City. The seminar focuses on the importance of surveying; pros and cons of use of condominium, subdivision lots, and raw lands as collateral; simplified appraisal techniques for brokers banks' appraisers and account officers; real estate taxation; and property management. This is an excellent set of topics to assist bankers in handling real estate transactions in the real world. Brokers are invited to participate in this seminar for continuing education. Only seasoned real estate consultants, appraisers, and sales managers will facilitate this two-day seminar. Please call Benny Babac at 374-6731 or Aurora Punzalan at 687-3372.

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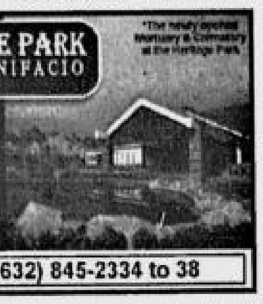

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Jose Dimaano Laig

Peacefully joined his Creator
on August 22, 2004 at the age of 67.

His loving wife **Angelina**;
children **Lycia**, **Liza**, **Leo** and **Louis**;
sons-in-law **Jaime** and **Glenn**;
daughter-in-law **Alice**;
brothers **Romeo**, **Nestor** and **Benito**;
and grandchildren **Jose Vicente**,
Diego Selo and **Jose Antonio**; relatives
and friends request the pious readers
to pray for the eternal repose
of his soul.

His cremated remains
are at Capilla De La Virgen, Sanctuario
De San Antonio Parish, Makati City.

"I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in Me will live,
even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

ARMANDO M. CORONEL

of San Juan, Batangas

Peacefully joined the Lord
on August 21, 2004 at the age of 81.

His loving wife **JULIANITA** (†); children & children-in-law **QUINITO** & **MAY**, **BOY** & **ALICE** and **JAY** & **MARIO**; grandchildren **MIKE**, **CARLO**, **LLOYD**, **MARK**, **NIÑA**, **KAT** and **DENISE**; great grandchildren **MYKEE** and **TJ**; brother and sisters, **JOSUE**, **VIOLY**, **NOEMI** and **LEAH** and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at **Nacional Memorial Homes (Chapel 1-A)**, 264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, August 25, 2004 at Himlayang Pilipino Memorial Park, Banlat, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 1:00 p.m. Mass.

Our Dearly Beloved

LT. GEN. LEONCIO S. TAN

"Tatang"

PMA Class '28
Former CG, Philippine Army
Former NBI Director
Former General Manager, NARIC (NFA)

Peacefully joined his Creator on August 21, 2004 at the age of 99.

His loving wife **ELY**; children **TERESITA SISON** and **CHING PUNZALAN**; son-in-law **CAPT. RAMON T. PUNZALAN (PN)**; grandchildren **DEDETTE** & **JOJO**, **LEO** & **ZAI**, **MARIE**, **ANTON** and **MARTIN**; great grandchildren, nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Santuario de San Antonio Parish,
McKinley Road, Forbes, Makati City.

Interment will be announced later.

Our Dear Mother

Flordeliza "Munti" Castañeda Ruiz

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on August 15, 2004
in St. Louis Missouri at the age of 76.

She is survived by her husband **Dr. Fulgencio 'Gene' Ruiz**; her children **Lisa & Santy**, **Freddie & Letlet**, **Gino & Marita**, **Jane**, **Farah & Clarence**, **Froilan & Arlyn**; and her grandchildren **Christian**, **Alison**, **Kayla & Gerick**.

Her remains lie in state at their residence in Lumang Bayan, Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

Interment will be on August 26, 2004 at St. Margaret Memorial Park after the 9:00 a.m. mass at San Sebastian Parish Church in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija.

Nanay we want you to know that
we are all together loving you.
So Sadly Missed and Lovingly Remembered
on her Nineteenth Death Anniversary

PURIFICACION CONJARES DE JESUS

(Lucena City)
BEST MOTHER
June 11, 1911 – August 24, 1985

Her children: **LILIA & BENHUR**, **CLODUALDO & CAROLINA**, **MA. TERESA & RICARDO**; grandchildren **NINGNING & ALFRED**, **CLAUDE & OLIVE**, **TOTI**, **OLIVER & LORALIE** and great grandchild **MICKEY**, friends and relatives request to pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Masses will be offered at Our Lady of Fatima Parish Church at Cordillera St., Q.C. and Holy Redeemer Church at 6:00 a.m.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8

In Loving Memory
on the occasion of the
1st Death Anniversary

ALFREDA CARREON REYES

Oton, Iloilo
23 December 1912 – 24 August 2003

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered on August 24, 2004 at the following churches:

5:45 AM –	**Immaculate Conception Church** Oton, Iloilo
7:30 AM –	**Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine** Sampaloc, Manila
10:45 AM –	**St. Anthony Shrine** Sampaloc, Manila
12:15 AM –	**National Shrine of the Holy Rosary, La Naval de Manila** Sto. Domingo Church, Quezon City
12:45 AM –	**Our Lady of Perpetual Help Shrine** Parañaque, Metro Manila
1:00 PM –	**Sta. Cruz Parish, Blessed Sacrament Fathers and Brothers**
6:00 PM –	**Our Lady of Remedies** Malate, Manila
6:00 PM –	**Immaculate Conception Church** Tayuman, Tondo, Manila

Her family requests relatives, friends and pious readers to please remember her always in their prayers. Thank you.

God says I will save those who love...
I will be with them...
I will save them.
(Psalm 91 14-16)

Ramon Z. Cuadra

Peacefully joined our Creator
on August 21, 2004 at the age of 73.

His remains now lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 29, 2004 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

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Province of Zambales

OFFICE OF THE BIDS
AND AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Office of the Municipal Engineer, Municipality of Masinloc, Province of Zambales invites registered contractor classified on Registration and Classification of Contractors to apply for pre-qualification and to submit bids for the following projects:

Name of Project	Location
Construction of Masinloc Multi-Purpose Municipal Hall (Phase III)	Brgy. Inhobol Masinloc, Zambales

The contract includes the furnishing of materials and labor necessary to complete the project.

Interested contractor may obtain their pre-qualification statements and bid documents from Municipal Engineer or the BAC Chairman Municipality of Masinloc, Province of Zambales upon payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (PhP1,000.00).

Suppliers shall submit to the BAC not later than 10:00 a.m., September 16, 2004 a) duly accomplished pre-qualification statements; b) proposal for said project using the prescribe bid form. All particulars shall be governed by the provisions of the IRR-RA 9184 concerning Government Procurement Reform Act.

Pre-Bid Conference : September 07, 2004 @ 10:00 a.m.
Bid Opening : September 16, 2004 @ 10:00 a.m.

The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or informality, assume no obligation whatsoever of indemnity to the bidders any expense of loss that it may incur in the preparation of its bid, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. ELLENDER C. ECLEVIA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI–Aug. 17 & 24, 2004)

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INVITATION TO BID

The Social Security System ("SSS") is inviting interested parties to bid for the purchase of One Hundred Eighty Seven Million Eight Hundred Forty Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Ninety One (P187,847,891) common shares of Equitable PCI Bank, Inc., with par value of Ten Pesos (P10.00) per share (the **"EPCIB Shares"**), which shares shall be sold as a block.

Interested parties may secure copies of: (a) the Instructions to Bidders, and annexes; and (b) the Bid Forms, after registration and payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00) or equivalent in US Dollars from the office of the Special Bids and Awards Committee (**"SBAC"**), 7th Floor SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

All prospective bidders must submit a complete set of Pre-qualification Documents and their Bids together with the Bid Security to the SBAC Office not later than 12:00 noon of 20 October 2004.

The winning bidder who shall post a Performance Security prior to being declared as such, shall be obliged to execute a Share Purchase Agreement with the SSS within seven (7) days from the receipt of the Notice of Award. If the winning bidder refuses or fails to execute the Share Purchase Agreement, the Bid Security as well as the Performance Security shall be forfeited in favor of SSS.

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality therein, or to accept such bids as may be advantageous to the SSS without giving any reason therefor.

The result of the bidding is subject to the right of BDO Capital and Investment Corporation to match the highest bid and notice is given that title to the EPCIB Shares may be affected by the final decision in pending cases described in the Instructions to Bidders involving the EPCIB shares.

For more information, please contact ***Mr. Nazario S. Cabuquit, Jr.*** at telephone numbers **924-7364** and **927-2337**.

Chairman
Special Bids and Awards Committee
For the Public Auction of SSS' EPCIB Shares

(PDI – August 23, 24 & 25, 2004)

SSS offers sale of Equitable/PCI shares

THE SOCIAL Security System (SSS) invites interested parties to bid for the purchase 187,847,891 common shares of Equitable PCI Bank, Inc. with par value P10 per share (the EPCIB Shares), which shall be sold as a block. The move was approved by the Social Security Commission in its meeting last Aug. 18. The bidding is through a "Swiss Challenge" where the result is subject to the right of BDO Capital and Investment Corp to match the highest bid and notice is given that title to the EPCIB Shares may be affected by the final decision in pending cases involving the EPCIB shares. This was disclosed by SSS President and CEO Corazon de la Paz. All prospective bidders must submit a complete set of Pre-qualification Documents and their Bids together with the Bid Security to the Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC) Office not later than 12 p.m. of Oct. 20. They may secure copies of: (a) the Instructions to Bidders, and annexes; and (b) the Bid Forms, after registration and payment of a non-refundable fee of P100,000 or the equivalent in US Dollars from the SBAC Office, 7th Floor, SSS Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City beginning Aug. 25. The winning bidder who shall post a Performance Security prior to being declared as such, shall be obliged to execute a Share Purchase Agreement with the SSS within seven (7) days from the receipt of the Notice of Award. If the winning bidder refuses or fails to execute the Share Purchase Agreement, the Bid Security as well as the Performance Security shall be forfeited in favor of the SSS. The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formality therein, or to accept such bids as may be advantageous to the SSS without giving any reason therefor. In the midst of pressures, the SSS clarified and assured the public that everything is above board. As SSS has a large exposure in EPCIB at approximately 8.5 percent of its total reserve funds, the SSS would benefit from a more diversified investment portfolio.

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The Board of Directors, Officers and Staff of
Directories Philippines Corporation

condole with the family of the late

JOSE D. LAIG

Chairman and former President

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on August 22, 2004 at the age of 67.

His cremated remains will be in Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City until 12:00 noon, Friday, August 27, 2004.

Interment will be on August 27, 2004 at the St. Alphonsus Liguori Church, Magallanes Village after the Mass (Schedule to be announced later).

Directories Philippines Corporation will offer daily Masses in Capilla de la Virgen at 7:00 p.m. until Thursday, August 26, 2004 for the eternal repose of his soul.

"For my yoke is easy and
my burden is light." Matthew 11:30

Our Dearly Beloved Mother

Stella Santiago vda de Del Rosario

*Peacefully joined her husband **TENTENG** on **August 22, 2004***
and now rests in the Infinite Embrace of our Lord.

Her loving Family ...

Children	**VIC & Evelyn Morales**
	IYO & Cora Paredes
	ONIC & Andy Santos
	TING & Caye Santiago
	VAL & Marice Arenas

Grandchildren, **Ria** and **Tonio Veloso**, **Vince**, **Ali**, **Joe**, **Leini**, **Tyge**, **Tommy**, **V.A.**, **Vittorio**; great granddaughter **Natalia**; Brothers and sisters, (†) **Salvador** & (†) **Marina Ramos**, (†) **Vicente**, **Salvadora Orejana**, **Felixberto**, **Florencia Lim**, (†) **Mercedes**; brother-in-law & sisters-in-law, (†) **Tiburcio**, **Elena** and Dra. **Jesusa del Rosario** and **Milagros Santiago** request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her cremated remains will lie in state at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Hall, Mount Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City, beginning Monday, August 23, 2004.

Interment will be on Thursday, August 26, 2004 after the 10:00 a.m. Funeral Mass at the Mount Carmel Church.

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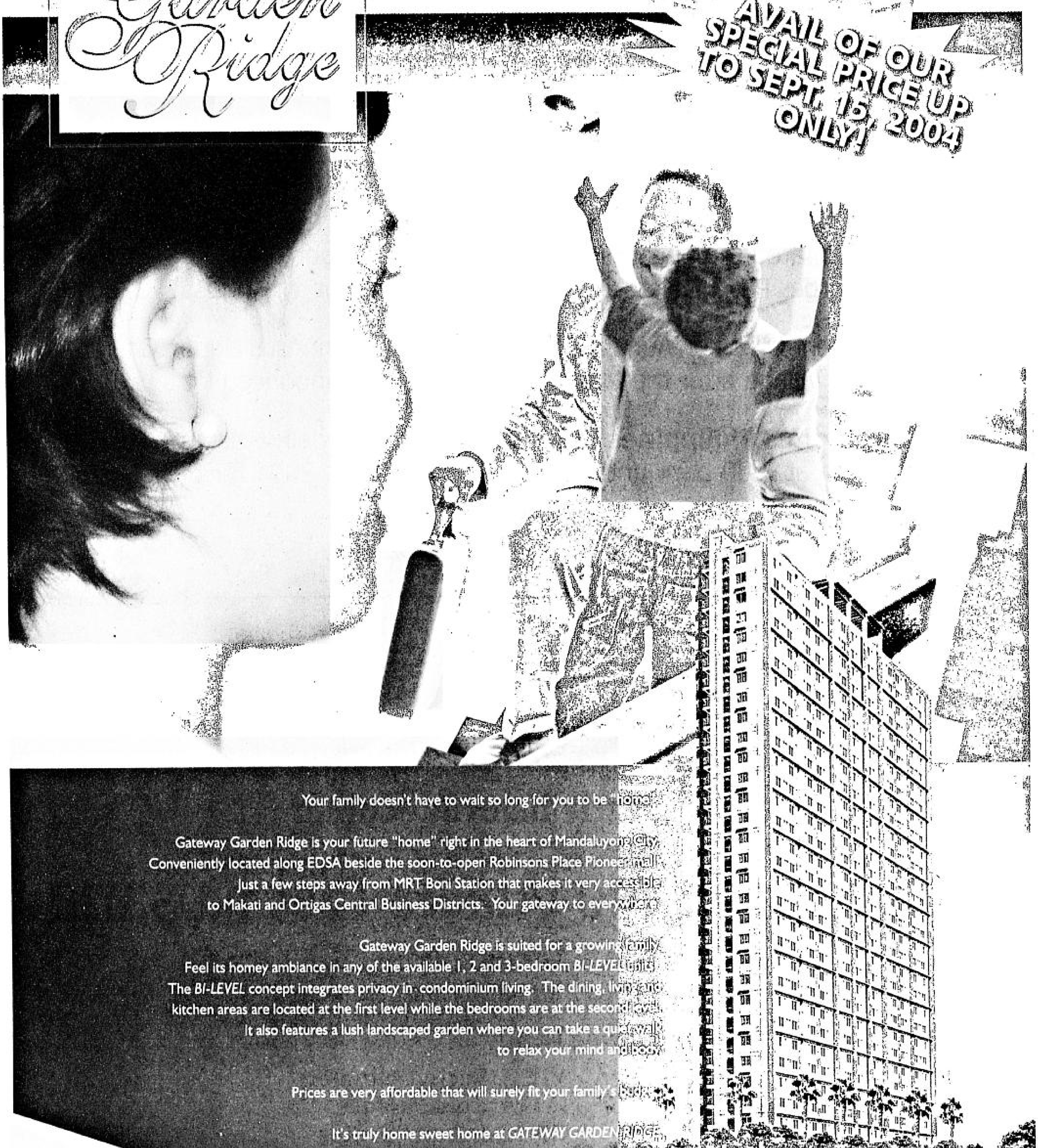

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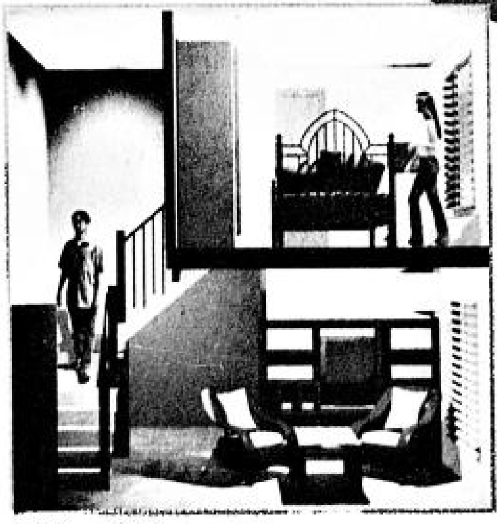
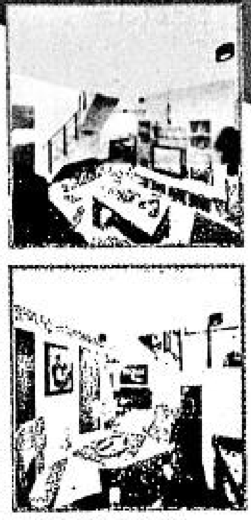
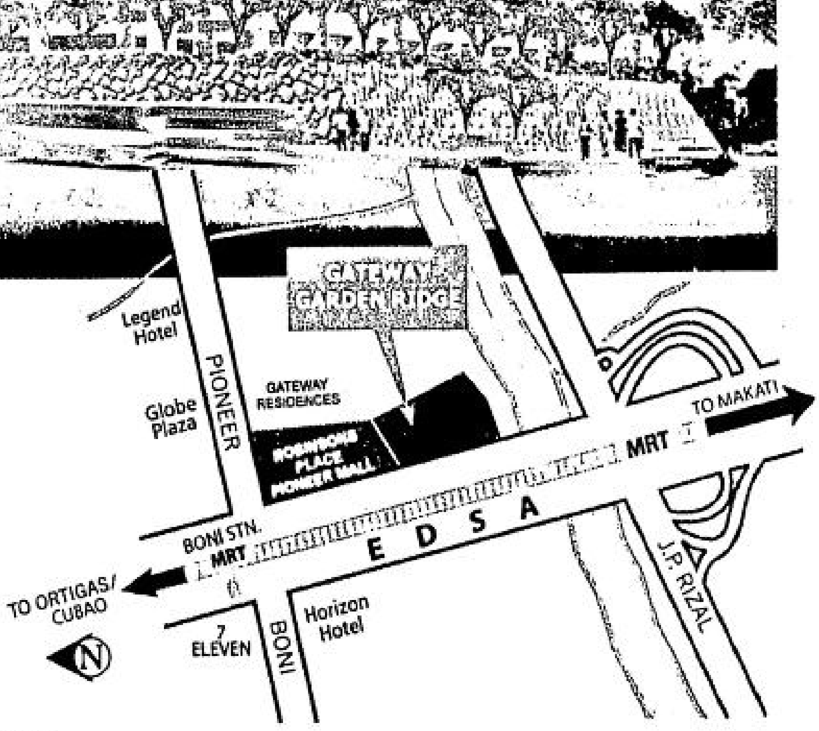


Unit Cross-Section



Interior Perspective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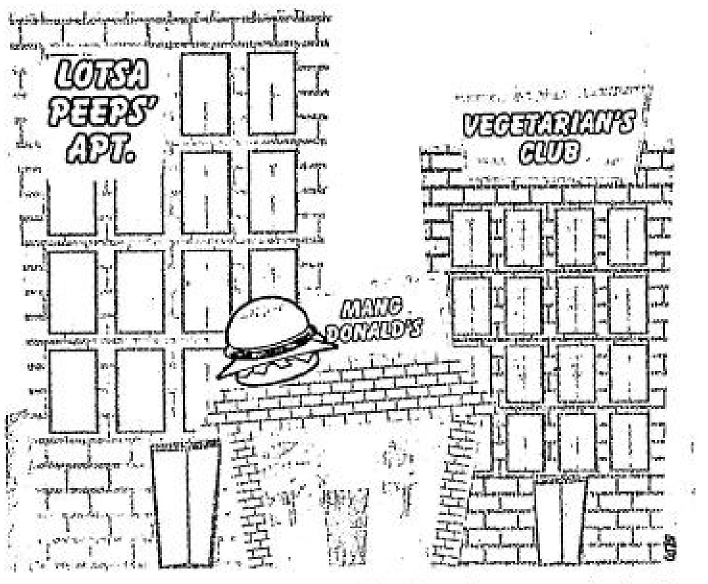
Choosing the right location of commercial spaces

By Alexis A. Acacio, Ph.D.

(Second of three parts)

BUILDING DREAMS



AFTER IDENTIFYING the right customer for your commercial establishment, then it is also important to identify the right location:

- **The Right Location**

In choosing the right location, it is important that the site should be accessible to your customers. If it is not convenient, then the place where your product or service is available has to become a destination. You would want to give easy accessibility of your products and services to your target customers. Choosing the right location is a combination of:

—**Site Specifications.** This concerns the geometric and linear dimensions of the lot or property. The three basic requirements are that of area, frontage and shape. If it is a gasoline station that you are considering, you may need about 2,000 square meters with a frontage of at least 40 meters. In comparing two lots of the same area, frontage and shape plays an important role.

If you were in the beach house or resort business, then the type of beachfront would have to be considered. The questions you need to answer cover the type of sand, the shallowness of the area, the strength of the waves, etc. You may need the expertise of a coastal engineer to assess whether the shoreline is safe for swimming or water sports. Site specifications are dependent on the product or service that you are selling or providing.

—**Visibility.** For retail spaces that mainly rely on purchases from the flow of pedestrian traffic, visibility is very important. Even if you have a perfect product but your retail space cannot be seen easily, you might not reach your target customers and not attain the revenues that you want. Signage position is also very important and should be checked and confirmed during planning.

Again, certain businesses need not be visible at all. These rely on word of mouth advertising and the place becomes a destination in itself. A good example is the resorts and restaurants in the famous vacation places.

—**Accessibility.** The site should be easily accessible to the target customer. If it is a drive-in restaurant, ingress should be easy and parking should be convenient. If it relies on walk-in customers, it should be accessible to public transportation.

The type of roadway that would eventually lead to the location of your business also plays a very important role in identifying the right location. Customers can easily turn away from a poor access road.

—**Area Characteristics.** This is about the "personality" of the area. Area character can either be planned or evolved. Planned character is popular among malls or clusters that were specifically developed to accommodate retail spaces with a certain theme. This would then attract a specific crowd.

In commercial space planning, the site character should be distinguished from the location character. Site character concerns with the physical characteristics of the commercial space. This is basically the layout, frontage, dimensions, etc. Location character reflects the nature of the location. The restaurants along Malate near Remedios Circle have a specific character and the restaurants in the Libis area have also their own. There is a specific clientele that is attracted to the location.

Other characters evolve with time. An example is the evolution of restaurants in Malate, Manila or Tomas Morato in Quezon City. Jupiter street in Makati was formerly a residential area but has now evolved into a restaurant cluster area.

—**Flow of Potential Customers.** The flow of the potential customers should be analyzed. Are your potential customers on their way to work or on their way home? What is the purchase occasion? Do they purchase only on Sundays or on specific days of the week? As an example, restaurant clusters surrounding the Redemptorist church in Baclaran have their highest revenues on Wednesday which is the popularly known "Baclaran Day."

—**Anchor Tenants.** If you are developing a commercial space, it might be a good idea to offer perks to your anchor tenants. Institutional anchor tenants are popular name brands. These can either be fast food, fine dining, or clothes, cakes, etc. They would create an image of your commercial space if you have them onboard prior to the full development of the area. Anchor tenants serve as magnets that would entice other tenants to occupy your other commercial spaces.

Be careful though in selecting your anchor tenants since they will set the theme and character of your commercial building.

E-mail the author at aaacacio@pacific.net.ph.

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Robinsons Gateway Center
Groundbreaking Ceremonies
ROBINSONS LAND

ROBINSONS CYBERGATE CENTER GROUNDBREAKING
Robinsons Land Corp. recently held the groundbreaking ceremonies of Robinsons Cybergate Center, an office building designed for IT businesses such as call centers and business process outsourcing companies. Robinsons Cybergate Center will soon rise in the busy stretch of Edsa corner Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City. Present during the groundbreaking are, from left, RLC business development director Mybelle Aragon Go-bio, GM for high-rise buildings division Danilo E. Ignacio, architects Vicente Rodriguez and Jose San Buenaventura and Monolith president Manny Mendoza.

7-story hospital soon to rise in Greenfield City

GREENFIELD CITY, the emerging business or commercial district in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, is poised to become the site of the soon-to-be-constructed Southern Luzon Hospital and Medical Center Inc.

An affiliate of Calamba Medical Center Inc., SLHMC is a multi-million-peso project aimed at extending valued medical services to various communities in and around Sta. Rosa, Silang and Tagaytay.

Modern medical facility

SLHMC is a seven-story hospital that will be built within the 3,500-square-meter property in the emerging Greenfield City. The state-of-the-art medical facility is set to accommodate doctors' offices and specialty clinics, a sophisticated laboratory, technologically advanced medical imaging department as well as a renal center and physical therapy unit. Using the most modern facilities, SLHMC is seen to provide quick and comprehensive examinations for all types of patients.

SLHMC is the latest addition to the growing number of prestigious institutions and industries within Greenfield City Estate. Fast becoming a choice location for business and commercial development projects among major industry players in the country, Greenfield City welcomed the SLHMC in its roster.

Playing host

Greenfield City takes pride in its esteemed presence throughout Sta. Rosa, playing host to the 65-hectare Greenfield Auto Park that houses Ford Motor Philippines and the Greenfield Auto Mall.

It also boasts of a commercial and leisure center Paseo de Santa Rosa, now a popular hub for fine dining, shopping and entertainment, especially among neighboring residential communities.

Right at the helm of the booming town south of Manila, Greenfield City is even made accessible with the expected completion of the new interchange at the South Luzon Expressway. The P175-million infrastructure is set to ease traffic in the bustling district, thus, benefiting some 200,000 daily commuters. This is apart from creating more business opportunities for multinational companies, boosting tourism and above all, generating employment in this new growth center and in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon).

With an interchange in place and opportunities for growth in the offing, Greenfield City is deemed to become the strategic site for business and commerce not only in Sta. Rosa but also throughout Calabarzon.

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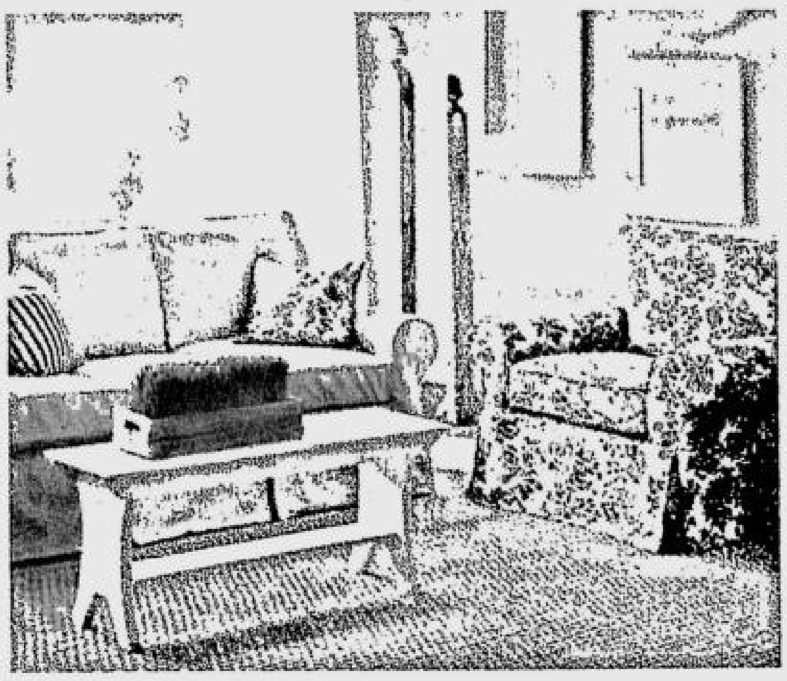
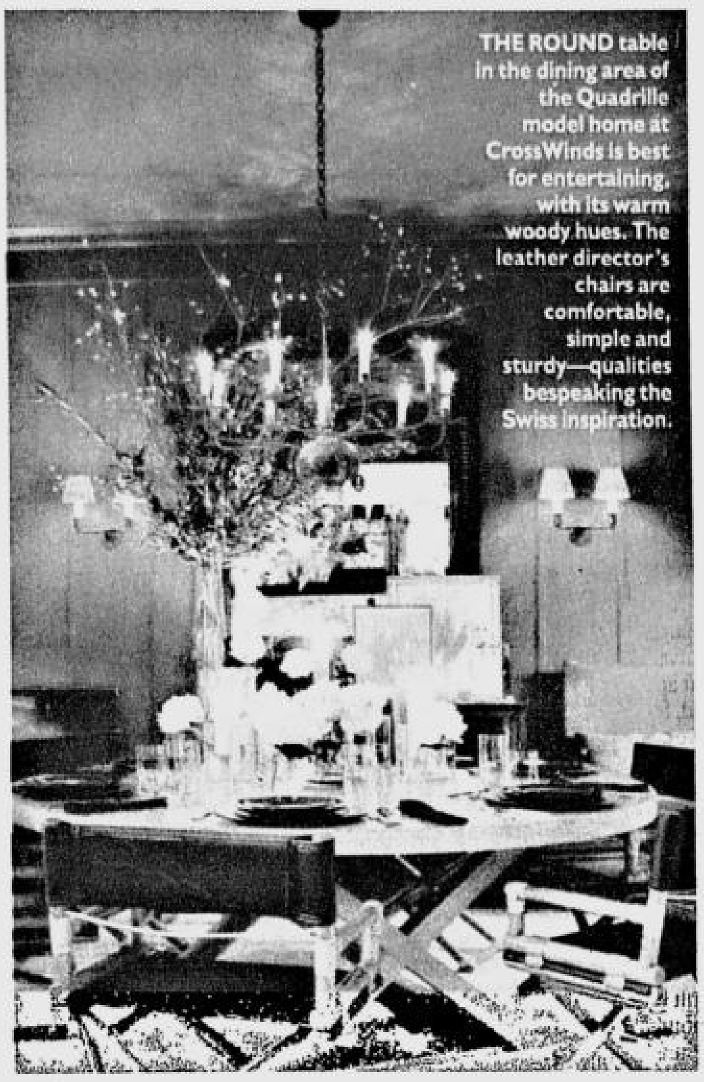


BRITTANY Bay's Victorianne Row neighborhood boasts the Duetto home model with its living area, imparting a neo-Victorian feel in keeping with the architectural inspiration evoking those "Postcard Row" residences on San Francisco's Alamo Square.

THE DINING area of the Duetto model home, with neo-Victorian touches in its details.



THE ROUND table in the dining area of the Quadrille model home at CrossWinds is best for entertaining, with its warm woody hues. The leather director's chairs are comfortable, simple and sturdy—qualities bespeaking the Swiss inspiration.

Brittany to launch 2 model homes on Aug. 29

BRITTANY Corp. is set to inaugurate two model homes at two of its developments on Aug. 29: the Duetto model on Victorianne Row in Brittany Bay near the Sucat Interchange in Parañaque; . and the Swiss Quadrille model at CrossWinds in Tagaytay.

Brittany is the maverick developer of high-end residential communities that are raising industry standards for vision, quality of planning and above all, distinctive themes that enhance property values and elevate them above the rest.

Flagship project

Brittany Bay, the company's flagship project, is a community of neighborhoods, an oasis of urban renewal that will revitalize the lifestyle of residents. Drawing its theme from the city of San Francisco with its neo-Victorian architecture, Brittany Bay's neighborhoods are functionally and visually complementary in line with the company's interpretation of urban renewal.

The neighborhoods give residents a range of choices: Victorianne Row with its Duettos and Quadrilles, houses with architecture evocative of "Postcard Row" on Alamo Square in San Francisco; La Posada, consisting of lovely, single-detached home and lot residences with picturesque windows and comfortable porches; and Viera, an impressive complex of mid-rise condos that embody privacy, style and community. The neighborhoods are complemented by selected restaurants and other commercial shops, greenery and landscaping, a promenade and a viewing deck, contributing to a natural, relaxed environment. Walkways will enable residents to stroll comfortably among the neighborhoods and commercial establishments.

CROSSWINDS' Quadrille model home features a boys' bedroom, with a sleigh bed and accents in checkered fabrics with Swiss color influences —bronze, camel, maple, reds and rust.

Exclusive retreat

CrossWinds is a Swiss-inspired weekend enclave, an exclusive retreat south of Metro Manila, the only one planted to thousands and thousands of imported pine trees, with choices of single-detached chalet-type homes or Quadrilles. The latter are thoughtfully designed structures, each consisting of four residences that maximize comfort and privacy while harmonizing with the landscape.

The idea behind the Swiss Quadrilles is to free up more space for the entire community, space which would otherwise become unavailable if all the residences were single-detached. Thus, residents have more of the outdoors and nature to appreciate.

CrossWinds affords its fortunate residents an escape just a short trip away from the metropolis, where the weather, the homes and the vistas reflect the Swiss inspiration. It, indeed, evokes the feeling of visiting a Swiss village in the country during summertime.

The homes and amenities blend with nature and its abundance of greenery. There is no structural clutter or over-building. CrossWinds is such an attractive haven that it already has full-time residents.

Sales update

According to Brittany Corp. president and general manager Jing Serrano, 85 percent of the units of Victorianne Row at Brittany Bay have been sold to date, and a new area will soon be opened. The Duettos' structural design comes courtesy of Architecture Network while the model interiors are designed by Pinky Cruz of Creative Post.

At CrossWinds, Serrano said, the first phase of the Swiss Quadrilles has been sold out. The second phase, called CrossWinds Rise, is now open to buyers. The Quadrilles's architectural design is rendered by Recio + Casas while the model interiors are designed by Ivy and Cynthia Almario.

After their inauguration, previews of the Duetto at Brittany Bay and the Quadrille at CrossWinds may be arranged by calling 850-6986, 850-2868 and 850-3359.

Creba's Salinas cited by BIR for dedicated, exemplary service

VICTOR T. Salinas, cited by the Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Associations (Creba) for being "most outstanding achiever" in various capacities for several years, was honored last week by the Bureau of Internal Revenue for his 18 years of "dedicated, outstanding and exemplary service" to it.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo L. Parayno Jr., assisted by Deputy Commissioner Lilian B. Hefti, awarded a plaque of appreciation to Salinas, expressing the agency's "profound, heartfelt and enduring gratitude" to him. The plaque was presented during the BIR's centennial celebration last Aug. 2.

Salinas was cited for his "active involvement" as private representative in the BIR technical committee on real property valuation since February 1986. He was praised for serving "without any remuneration and with high standards of professional excellence which stood out as a paragon of the best in public service and an inspiration to all who choose to serve the government and make a difference." With such "unselfish and dedicated public service," the plaque said, Salinas "has earned a place of honor in the history of the bureau."

Salinas is into real estate brokerage, appraisal and consultancy. He has consistently lectured in real estate seminars for private sector groups and for government agencies, including the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Home Guaranty Corp., Pag-Ibig Fund, DENR, SSS and Department of Finance. He was a former examiner of the Bureau of Trade and Regulation and Consumer Protection of the Department of Trade and Industry in license applications for appraisers and consultants.

Philip Recto awardees off to Singapore for 2-year training with Architects 61

THE PHILIP Recto Design Excellence Awards instituted by the UP College of Architecture announced that Charles Simon Frivaldo and Risha Carla Tobias have left for Singapore recently to join Architects 61, one of the best architectural firms in Asia.

Both cum laude graduates, Frivaldo and Tobias will formally start their two-year training with Architects 61 in Singapore soon and join Ingrid Niña Araneta and Tisha SyCip Cukingnan, the previous Philip Recto 4wardees, at the same firm.

Founded in 1974, Architects 61 has designed many landmarks in Singapore. Among them are the Raffles City Complex, Treasury Bldg., UOB Plaza, Singapore Exchange Center, Fullerton Square and Fort Canning Country Club. The firm also has branch offices in Kuala Lumpur and Shanghai.

The Philip Recto Award program started in 2000. It gives recognition to top design theses and also assists the awardees to obtain oversea training with renowned architectural firms in Singapore or Kuala Lumpur for a two-year period with attractive remunerations. Architect Recto himself started his professional career in Singapore.

Charles Frivaldo is the son of Sunny Jose Frivaldo, a CPA and wife Josephina; while Risha Tobias is the daughter of businessman Ricardo Tobias and wife Pat.

FRIVALDO

TOBIAS

ROCKWELL TOPS OFF THE MANANSALA

Rockwell Land marks the structural completion of The Manansala three months ahead of schedule. Lopez Group of Companies chair Oscar M. Lopez and Rockwell Land CEO Tong Padilla leads the topping off rites on The Manansala's 41st floor. Present are Summa Kumagai Inc. president and CEO Albert Altura, Summa Kumagai project director John Nelson, and several executives of general contractor SKI-Balfour JV, quantity surveyors Davis Langdon & Seah Phils., and window and glazing subcontractor Loxon Wandsset. Also present are a number of unit owners.

LPHI seeks further growth by offering new product line

FROM AFFORDABLE housing projects mostly in Southern Luzon, mid-income property giant Laguna Properties Holdings Inc. is moving into new territory. It is bullish that by applying its formula of offering value-for-money and an assurance of high quality, it will duplicate its track record outside the metropolis right in Metro Manila.

LPHI, which registered net revenues of P2.04 billion in 2003, is now the leading provider of affordable house-and-lot units in the country.

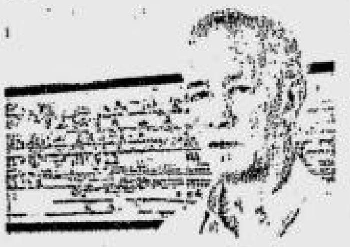
LPHI president Manuel J. Colayco explains: "We will seek growth by offering affordable units in mid-rise residential buildings in Metro Manila. We intend to redefine condominium living as most Filipinos know it today."

Filling gap in the market

The company plans to offer units in mid-rise residential buildings in convenient locations with price tags of around P1 million and fill a sizable gap in the market. It will distinguish itself from other players in the same segment by drawing from its expertise in planning, property management and a tradition of quality across its spectrum of product lines.

Colayco notes that just as LPHI built its name by offering homes that are built to last in communities with 24-hour water, security and village management, it will make inroads in Metro Manila by offering the same benefits. "We want our customers to remain satisfied long after they have moved into their units," he says.

LPHI believes satisfaction will come from units that are laid out for efficiency and have good ventilation and residential complexes with amenities that will continue to work long after the last unit has been sold.



COLAYCO explains that innovation and technology will allow LPHI to offer quality condominiums with price tags of less than P1 million in convenient locations.

Dealing with pitfalls

Vandalized elevators, inconsistent water supply, loose security and poorly maintained common area facilities are among the many inconveniences that unit owners in many mid-priced residential condominium complexes in Manila must endure today. "LPHI will deal with these pitfalls by making provisions for sustained property management as well as offering training to homeowners," says Colayco.

Major attraction

Colayco stresses that its mid-rise buildings will also offer location as a major attraction. "We realize that many Metro Manilans don't want to live away from the conveniences and attractions of the city. They want to live close to where they work and where their kids go to school. On weekends, they want to be just a short drive away from the mall and other entertainment centers," he says.

He explains that innovation and technology will make it possible for LPHI to meet the P1 million and below price ceiling for a vast majority of Metro Manila income earners. Just as LPHI standardized single-detached homes and controlled costs through the use of precast parts that can then be quickly assembled onsite, it intends to use the same technology to make homes in mid-rise buildings affordable to many.

Projects

The company's first venture in residential condominiums is One Aeropolis in Sucat, Parañaque, where a 20-square-meter studio apartment that sells for less than P1 million, comes with high ceilings, panoramic windows, landscaped atrium gardens and other amenities. One Aeropolis' warm market reception prompted a second project, another an oasis-themed mid-rise condominium in Santolan, Quezon City, located on a 1.2-hectare property on Boni Serrano Street. Units will be priced similarly.

From housing projects located mostly in Laguna and Batangas and with strong appeal to families of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), LPHI has expanded to 10 other locations in Luzon and the Visayas. From affordable house-and-lot units, it has also expanded its product lines to include higher-end homes for upwardly mobile executives and entrepreneurs as well as vacation homes and farm lots in idyllic locations.

Budding designers reinvent the museum

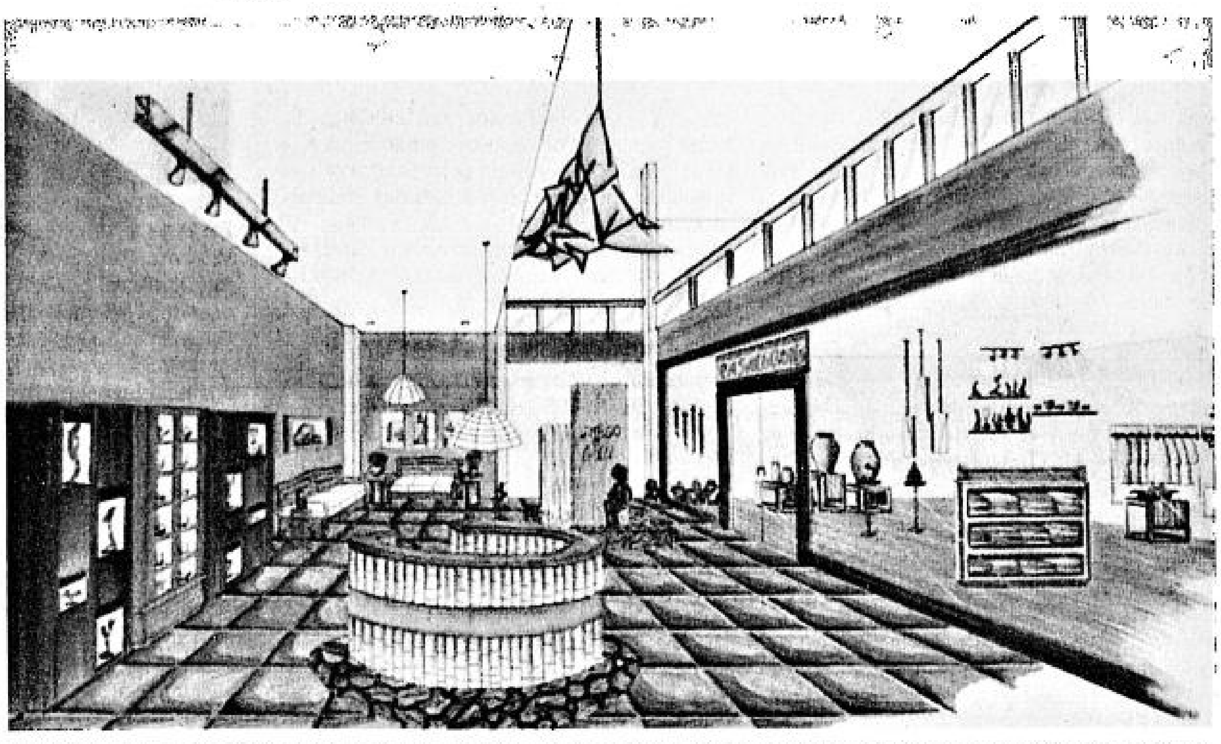
DID you know that the Metropolitan Museum of Modern Art in New York City draws an average of 5 million visitors every year, while our local museums draw far less people compared to the city's malls and entertainment centers which are a beehive of activity even on a workday? How come only foreign visitors and students take time out to visit our museums?

Faced with the dilemma of dwindling patronage and support, our museums need to cultivate a warmer and more cordial image that appeals to more people, away from the cold, formal and stuffy confines that people have come to associate them with. Sensitive to the people's perceptions, the Philippine School of Interior Design has directed the Advanced Class of 2004 to redesign and refurbish the floor plans of existing local museums according to a specific theme as part of its Specialized Interiors program.

More pressing task

Designing and building a house is difficult enough, considering the enormous amount of details that go into such a major undertaking. Designing a museum? It's an even more pressing task because it showcases the patrimony and legacies from the past; and must be able to tell the story thematically, tracing and narrating history all at the same time.

Taking up the challenge, the Advanced Class 2004 submitted more than 20 concepts covering a wide spectrum of design inspirations. Among those that stood out were the designs for a Museum of Music, a Museum of Modern Art, the Global Museum of Fine Arts, a Museum of National Culture and the Museum of Ethnology.



MUSEUM of Ethnology features fabrics, basketry, traps and woven cases, accessories, religious items and furniture, as well as the weaponry and armory, musical instruments and cookware of the various Philippine ethnic groups. Brown hues accentuated by terra cotta Vigan tiles give the lobby a very warm and cozy atmosphere.

Students Leny-Lyne Ang and Lea Lee created the Museum of Music that traces the evolution of music from the pre-Hispanic period up to the present. With four galleries depicting the main eras in Philippine music history namely: "Oyayi," "Cenakulo," "Bodabil" and "Himig," they have created a museum that shows people how music affects them, and vice versa.

Far from being a mere assemblage of acclaimed masterpieces, the Museum of Modern Art designed by Carina Sison and Yanny Yu, aims to make art more accessible to people from all walks of life. It is committed to establishing, preserving and documenting a collection of contemporary art by both local and international artist which will be housed in seven galleries, five of which are dedicated to the permanent exhibits.

On the other hand, The Global Museum of Fine Arts, designed by Rosselle Yabut and Hazel Vizcarra, will have an interactive area where people can sketch after viewing the collection of paintings, sculptures and pottery from all over the world. The exhibit floor will be divided into different continents, which will be further divided into the different countries that comprise a specific continent.

The group of Jenneth Sy, David Yu and Eunice Ong envisioned the Museum of National Culture, with its three main galleries, to be a place where the Filipinos can better understand the diverse beliefs and traditions that has shaped their national identity. The design inspiration is a fusion of both modern and indigenous Philippine materials.

Lastly, the Museum of Ethnology will feature the various ethnic groups that make up the Philippines' rich and diverse culture. The group of Anna Blanco, Monica Cordero, and Andrew Galano divided the exhibits into several categories: fabrics, basketry, traps and woven cases, accessories, religious items and furniture. The museum will also feature weaponry and armory, musical instruments and cookware.

Very crucial role

The museum plays a very crucial role in molding our understanding of ourselves as a people and the world we live in. Amid the onslaught of modernization, there is a need to look back at our humble beginnings to see how far we have come but also to open our eyes to the immense task that lies ahead.

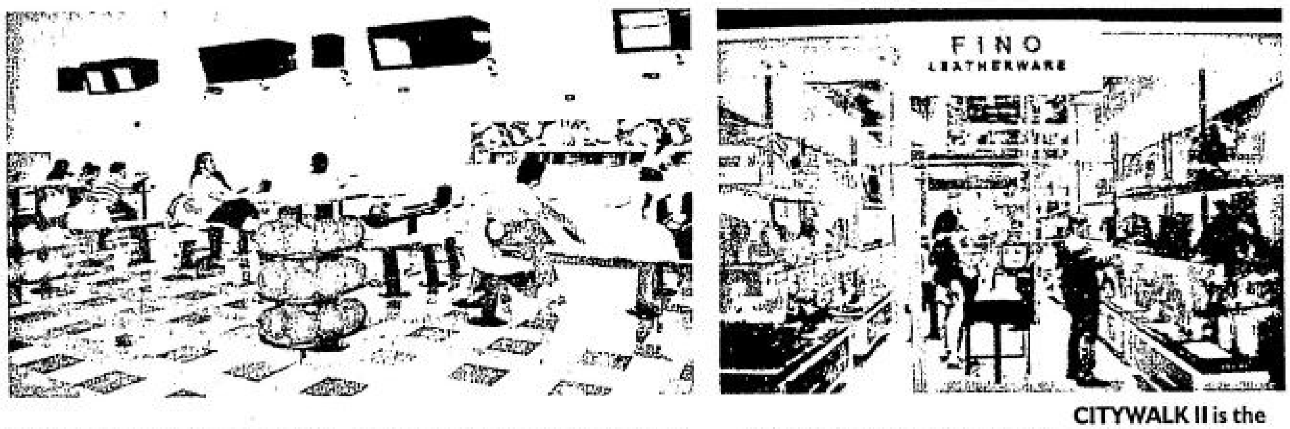
True to its pioneering vision of strengthening the growth and development of interior design in the country, the Philippine School of Interior Design is offering a subject in the specialized field of Museum Design. PSID feels a great responsibility in doing its share of making the journey of discovery equally meaningful, inspiring and entertaining, thereby encouraging the Filipinos to develop a deeper understanding and greater appreciation of their own unique culture.

New retail shops rise at Eastwood City Walk 2

UNLIKE the boxy and massive edifices of the city's other malls, Eastwood City Walk in Libis is a cozy pleasure zone that combines Mediterranean-inspired architecture with the laid-back lifestyle of downtown Miami. The park's unique overall design, with splashes of bright yellow, red, blue and salmon hues, graceful palm trees, cascading fountains, lush gardens and cobbled walkways, incorporates the best of public spaces and private business, ushering in a dynamic shift in urban commercial development.

Strolling along its colonnaded walkways, one gets the feeling of being someplace else, rather than in the middle of the concrete jungles of Metro Manila. Designed as a village center, City Walk offers its regular habitués and visitors innumerable shops for lifestyle and convenience. There's a supermarket for your grocery essentials, and trendy boutiques for fashionable clothes and the latest electronic gizmos. Right around the block is a home center for fine furniture, home décor and artworks.

Everything is just a few steps away at City Walk, whether you are in the market for the right outfit, want to study a craft or hobby or simply want to unwind after a busy day at the office. As the name implies, City Walk is a place where pedestrians, not vehicles, reign supreme in the streets. The abundance of al fresco areas give the place a rustic, quaint and charming ambiance that is a welcome respite from today's fast-paced world.



CITYWALK II is the ideal place to hang out with friends on a leisurely weekend with its bowling center and shopping areas.

Retail center

Eastwood City Walk 2 was built as a hip retail center to compliment the dining outlets of City Walk I. Inspired by the new strip mall developments in major cities abroad, this Mediterranean-inspired retail hub is perfect for shopping and lounging out. With four new restaurants, 29 retail shops, four Dolby Digital EX cinemas, Paeng's Bowl and Billiard Center, and Q Power Station, an ultramodern yideo arcade; this follow up to the highly successful City Walk 1 presents an eclectic mix of shops to choose from.

Among the selection of stores that provide customers with world-class products and impeccable services at the City Walk 2 are some of the most stylish local and international names in the world of fashion. Each one of them has carved its own niche in the industry, and enjoys a cult following among the city's hip social set and upwardly-mobile urban professionals.

The laid back and free-spirited environment has spawned many lifestyle shops and luxury boutiques like Bayo, Marithe+Francois Girbaud, Mossimo, Nike Park, People Are People, and soon-to-open Bench. There is also Fino, renowned for its finely crafted leather ware; Planet Silver for choice accessories; Beauty Bar for cosmetics and health products; A Different Bookstore, for the bookworms; and Toy Town for the kids at heart.

The second floor is a haven for die-hard fashionistas with All Boxed Up, Chocolate Clothing, Ensembles, Faro, Porcupine/Details, Gingersnaps and Just G. The sports buff will flip over the collections of Adidas, Mizuno, Nike Attitude and Speedo. Shoppers may also sample the great finds at Braun Buffel, Lai Jewelry, Shoe Salon, Time Depot and "O" Music and Video Store.

Just a few steps up at the third level is a treat for kid shoppers with Napoleon, a boutique for kids, and Maxiworks, a toy store.

Shopping, entertainment

Today, Eastwood City Walk is the newest and most innovative one-stop entertainment and shopping destination for a generation with a passion for the uncompromising lifestyle of leisure and entertainment. It has emerged into a sensational pleasure hub that combines the sweet, serene mood of nature; and the fast, upbeat flavor of a mall that's always in motion. It is a relaxing sanctuary for tired and weary souls by day, and a hip and jumping gathering place for Manila's party set as soon as night falls. It is your "urban retreat" right in the heart of Manila's most exciting "satellite city" that has all the aspects of city life in one carefully designed, self-contained, trendsetting community.

CPAC Monier market share in concrete roof tiles up

CPAC Monier Philippines Inc., manufacturer of market leader CPAC Monier concrete roof tiles, has already achieved 65 percent of its annual sales volume target during the first six months alone. This puts the company firmly on track to exceed the 2004 projection by at least 15 percent, company officials said.

At the same time, CMPI president Rodolfo Bueno said the company has solidified its top position in the concrete roof tiles segment by capturing 63 percent market share during the first half, up from its 55 percent position in December 2003.

Growing market share

"Our market share is increasing through the implementation of our various strategies that combine sustainable growth, competitiveness and profitability," Bueno said.

"We believe that the success of our approach relies primarily on capability to meet and satisfy our clients' needs and expectations," he added.

Bueno said their first half results showed a 46 percent increase in the company's sales volume compared with the same period last year. This indicates not only a healthy recovery in the construction sector but also an increasing awareness about the advantages of concrete roof tiles over other traditional roofing materials.

Market penetration

A big factor in the successful market penetration of CPAC Monier concrete roof tiles is the decision of the country's major developers to switch steadily to the product because it is more durable, more comfortable for end-users, and has a very high esthetic value.

Contrary to perceptions that concrete roof tiles are more expensive, Bueno said developers and homeowners have discovered the opposite because there is virtually no maintenance cost once the roof tiles are properly installed.

Word of mouth, coupled with strategic partnerships and marketing programs, resulted in ever-increasing demand for CPAC Monier concrete roof tiles which CMPI is only too pleased to satisfy.

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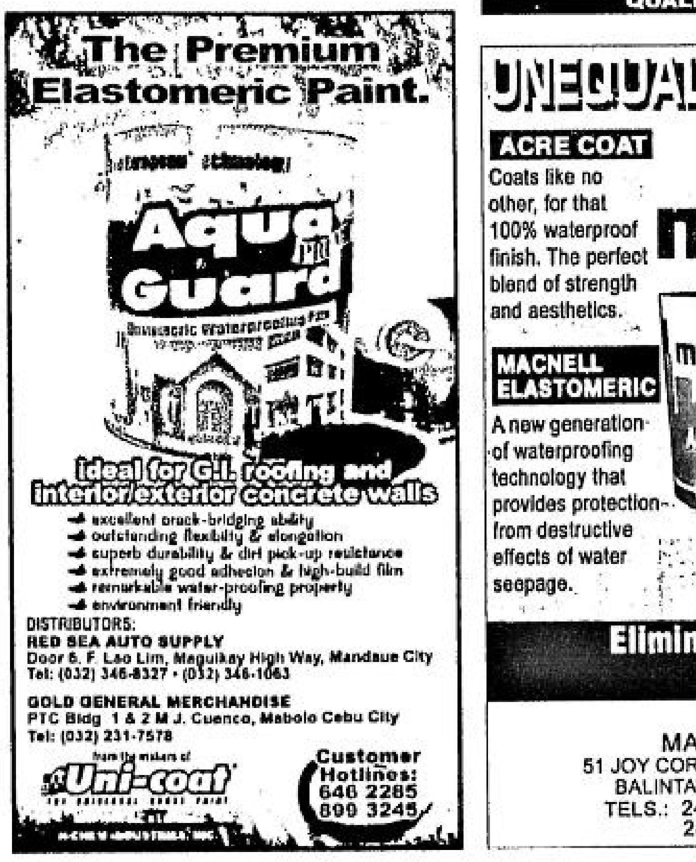

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Cambridge Village: A community above the rest

WHAT do middle-income Filipino home buyers want? How can we make their lives better? These are the kinds of questions that leading township developer Empire East Land Holdings Inc. seeks to answer when master-planning self-contained communities tailored for the middle-income market.

Empire East shows its flair for anticipating and meeting the needs of its customers with Cambridge Village, a breakthrough community in the Pasig-Cainta area that recreates the mini town concept made famous by Empire East's Laguna BelAir in Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon). The 7.4-hectare Cambridge Village—one of the most innovative developments of its kind—lets middle-income residents experience a complete and affordable lifestyle in the middle of the city.

French-inspired homes

Featuring French-inspired homes, Cambridge Village, now 18 percent complete, is currently into its third phase following the brisk take-up of its first two phases. The two-level homes of the eight-cluster Phase 1 have already been sold out, while the more spacious, flat-type 40-square-meter homes and 128-square-meter combination units of the six-cluster Phase 2 are enjoying strong sales. Phase 2's combination units feature three bedrooms and three toilet-baths. Meanwhile, Phase 3 showcases the two-level units that have made Phase 1 a big hit among homebuyers.

Cambridge Village homes are available through easy in-house financing schemes. Monthly amortization rates go for as low as P12,444.53 for Phase 2 units and as low as P8,414.45 for Phase 3 units.

Play amenities

Topnotch play amenities add to the charm of Cambridge Village. The two-story village clubhouse hosts a library, karaoke bar, mini theater and gym. Adjoining the clubhouse is a 25-meter lap pool and landscaped gardens. An upcoming tennis court will provide more challenging workouts for sports-minded residents.

At Cambridge Village, even the basic necessities are well taken care of: uninterrupted water and power supply are available as well as a standby generator for selected common areas. 'Round-the-clock security at the entry and exit points of all residential buildings ensures the safety of residents while a professional maintenance team is in charge of the upkeep of the community's facilities and surroundings.

Completing the community is a commercial arcade that features shops offering a variety of goods and services.

Prime location

Cambridge Village enjoys a prime location close to the Makati and Ortigas business districts, commercial centers such as Eastwood City and top learning institutions such as Ateneo, UP, Miriam College, Xavier School and La Salle Greenhills. The development is easily accessible via the Manggahan Road, Edsa and C-5 Road.

At Cambridge Village, Empire East combines quality with affordability in one value-packed package. Today, middle-income families can own the luxury and convenience of a metropolitan lifestyle at a budget-friendly price.

Interested parties can view the new flat-type and loft-type model units at the project site and at SM North, SM Megamall and SM Fairview. For more information, call the Empire East hotline at 867-8855.

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PRESENT during the event are, from left: R. Villarosa Architects Partners & Associates managing partner architect Rogelio Villarosa; Filinvest Alabang Inc. project development manager Jun Gonzales; Convergys GM Marife Zamora; FAI executive vice president Josephine Gotianun Yap, first vice president Ieyo de Guzman and VP architect Juanito Tablizo; R. Villarosa Architects partner architect Roy Villarosa; JBDEC Inc. president engineer Juanchito Bernardo; and Amcon & Co. Inc. managing partner architect Ramon Isaac.

Convergys building nears completion

TOPPING-OFF ceremonies were held recently in Northgate Cyberzone for the 65,000 square-foot, three-story building to be occupied by Convergys Corp., the world's largest provider of integrated billing customer care services. Targeted for completion in August 2004, Convergys Northgate Cyberzone Center will house more than 500 seats and is soon to be operational. Convergys Center was constructed in a build-to-sit arrangement between Convergys and Cyberzone Properties Inc., developer or facilities provider of Northgate Cyberzone IT Park located within Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang.

A happy home

FROM LEFT are Lino Lacson Severino III, Ma. Gladez Ilao, Sentricon sales manager of Dow AgroSciences, and Ramon Catarata, president and general manager of Vira Pest Control.

DREAMS spring from the heart and are nurtured in the home. But what happens when the home is in danger of being torn down by termites?

Lino Lacson Severino III grew up in an upper middle-class subdivision in Parañaque. When he got married, Lino decided to build a house in the same community. Only six months after the Severinos moved in, they discovered that their ground was a foraging place for termites.

Termite infestation

Says Lino: "There are a lot of vacant houses in the area that had been destroyed by termites. The termites crossed from an old, abandoned home and attacked my house."

The 300 square-meter family sanctuary the termites gnawed through was interior decorated by Lino's mother, the former Millie Lacson, daughter of the late Manila Mayor Arsenio Lacson. Love is in the details and it shows in the way the home was designed—tastefully modern and sublime in its simplicity.

For six years, the Severinos relied on traditional termiticides to get the termites off their property. The critters disappeared after every treatment but always reemerged with a vengeance because the termites had merely scampered to other areas of the house.

"Before we knew it, our entire home had been infested, especially the lower portions," Lino says. "The cabinets, closets and shelves collapsed and my wife's kitchenware were all broken."

The head of the house searched for a solution that would put an end to their termite woes. He looked up the Yellow Pages and came upon Sentricon Termite Colony Elimination System, a Dow AgroSciences technology that claimed total colony elimination. He asked quotations from about four authorized operators, including Ramon Catarata's Vira Pest Control Co., but found the cost prohibitive.

However, Melvin, a staff of Vira Pest Control, proved to be an ardent salesman. He prodded and called the Severinos three times a week for eight months.

Slightly annoyed yet impressed by the man's determination, Lino decided to give the system and the guy a chance. Says Lino: "If not for him, I would not have subscribed to Sentricon because of the expense. I had to find a budget for it. And I also knew that if I didn't do something about it, my house will be gone—it's as simple as that. And Melvin guaranteed me. I said yes sometime in October last year."

In less than three months, the termites were eliminated. Sentricon works by taking advantage of natural termite behavior so technicians can now get subterranean termites where they live. The breakthrough system claims total colony elimination since it works like a treatment method and a warning device.

3 steps

It does the job in three steps: First, pest control professionals will place monitoring stations in the soil around the sites, checking these regularly for signs of termite activity. Next, as soon as termites begin feeding in the station, Sentricon technicians will replace the monitoring unit with a Baitube device that contains termite bait (the substance prevents them from molting, so that they are unable to grow, causing them to die). The termites will unsuspectingly summon their nest mates to the site by leaving special scent trails that lead to the bait. Finally, once the colony is eliminated, the bait will be replaced with new monitoring devices, which the technician will inspect closely and regularly for renewed termite activity.

Reminisces Lino: "They changed one monitoring device twice and on the third visit, the bait was eaten a little but that was it—no more termites! After that, they visited me more than 10 times and there's no trace, none at all." He adds in jest, "So I actually did my neighbors a favor by eliminating their termites."

Environment friendly

Severino observes that "with Sentricon, you don't inhale any chemicals; there's nothing toxic around your house. It's environment friendly because it doesn't poison the ground, unlike traditional methods, which inject chemicals into the ground. After they do that, all the plants die, the soil dies, even the ants die. It's that toxic!"

Says Lino: "I have friends who buy poison and do the treatment themselves, spraying their cabinets with chemicals. I tell them, 'That's hazardous to your health.' Although they can afford it, they're saving their cash. But Sentricon is less costly in the long run because once the colony is eliminated, you only have to renew and that doesn't cost much."

Nowadays, he gets to do what he really loves—spend time with his wife Marivic and their two kids Gino and Bea in their beautiful, termite-free home, and concoct delicious Italian sauces in the family kitchen. He resigned from Mandarin Oriental where he worked for 20 years, went to Verona, Italy to learn Italian cooking, and set up a small business called the Sauce Shop. His epicurean instinct he must have inherited from grandfather Arsenio who cooks without a recipe.

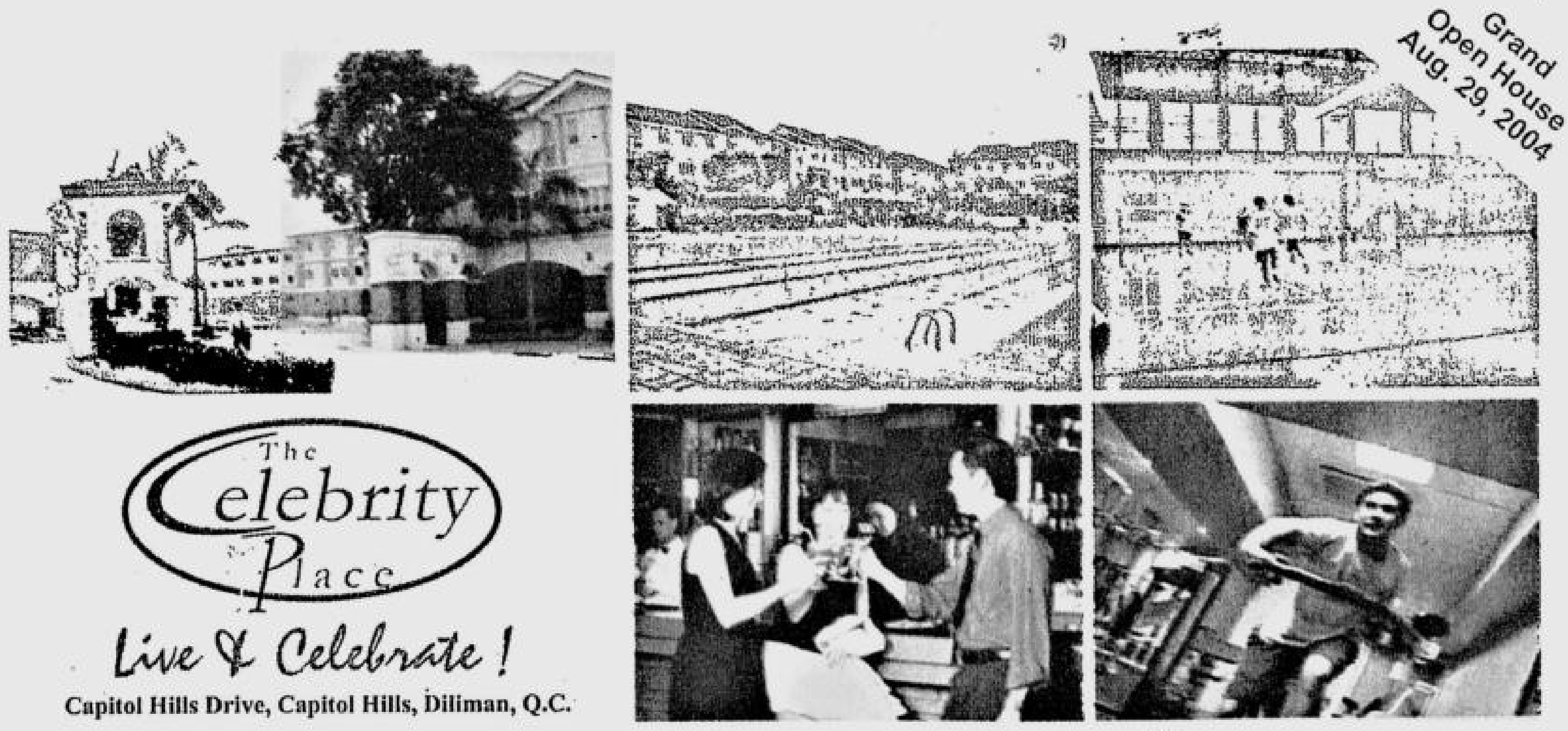
Lino says he is starting to join bazaars and eventually will market it to grocery stores. At present, he supplies Barangay Merville, which consists of around 13 subdivisions in Parañaque. Most of his clients are expats who appreciate his nuanced cooking. His father, who also loves to cook, has a restaurant in Antipolo called "Severinos" and Lino's sauces make very happy diners.

Tough balancing act

He knows that success in both family life and career is a tough balancing act but one just has to find ways and means to do it. "Success is measured by the amount of quality time you spend with your family and your career. When the kids grow up and get married, they're not yours anymore so spend time with them while they're still with you."

Now that he's happy at home doing the things he loves best, Lino shares that "to be happy in life, you have to love what you do. Because if you don't, it becomes such a burden for you to go to work and you will continuously dwell on the negatives. So try to find a career where you can enjoy yourself, where you can be happy."

For inquiries about Sentricon, call Vira Pest Control at 728-3174, 834-2494, 728-3214 or visit its website www.sentricon.com.



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DEVELOPER:
ONE ASIA DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

The Celebrity Place launches special payment scheme

Property developer One Asia Development Corp. will launch on Aug. 29 during its Grand Sell-Out Party special discounts and payments schemes for the celebrity for the Celebrity Place townhouses and condominium units in Diliman, Quezon City.

For a townhouse installment plan, One Asia is now accepting five percent downpayment payable in 30 days from reservation date. Twenty five percent is payable from nine to 12 months while the 70 percent balance is payable on the 10th or 13th month.

For spot downpayment, buyers can avail of 12 percent discount on minimum spot of 30 percent downpayment payable in seven days from reservation date. The 70 percent balance is payable thru in-house or bank financing.

For Spot cash buyers, One Asia is offering a 15 percent discount on the total list price with full payment payable in seven days from reservation date.

One Asia is also offering thirty percent downpayment payable in 18 months, with 70 percent balance payable on the 19th month thru in-house or bank financing on The Celebrity Place Condominiums.

Another scheme is 30 percent downpayment payable in 24 months, with the 70 percent balance due on the 25th month thru in-house or bank financing.

For spot downpayment on condo units, a ten percent off on the total list price is offered. Thirty percent downpayement is required in seven days from reservation date and the 70 percent balance is payable thru in-house or bank financing.

For spot cash on condo units, One Asia is offering 12 percent discount on the total list price and 30 percent spot downpayment payable in seven days from reservation date. The 70 percent balance is due 30 days from reservation date.

The highlight of the August 29 event will include a free seminar on the basics of *feng sui* by the famous Prof Charlie Chao.

For more information about The Celebrity Place, contact 687-3706 or 634-0517 to 18.

Q&A on 3A's /D3

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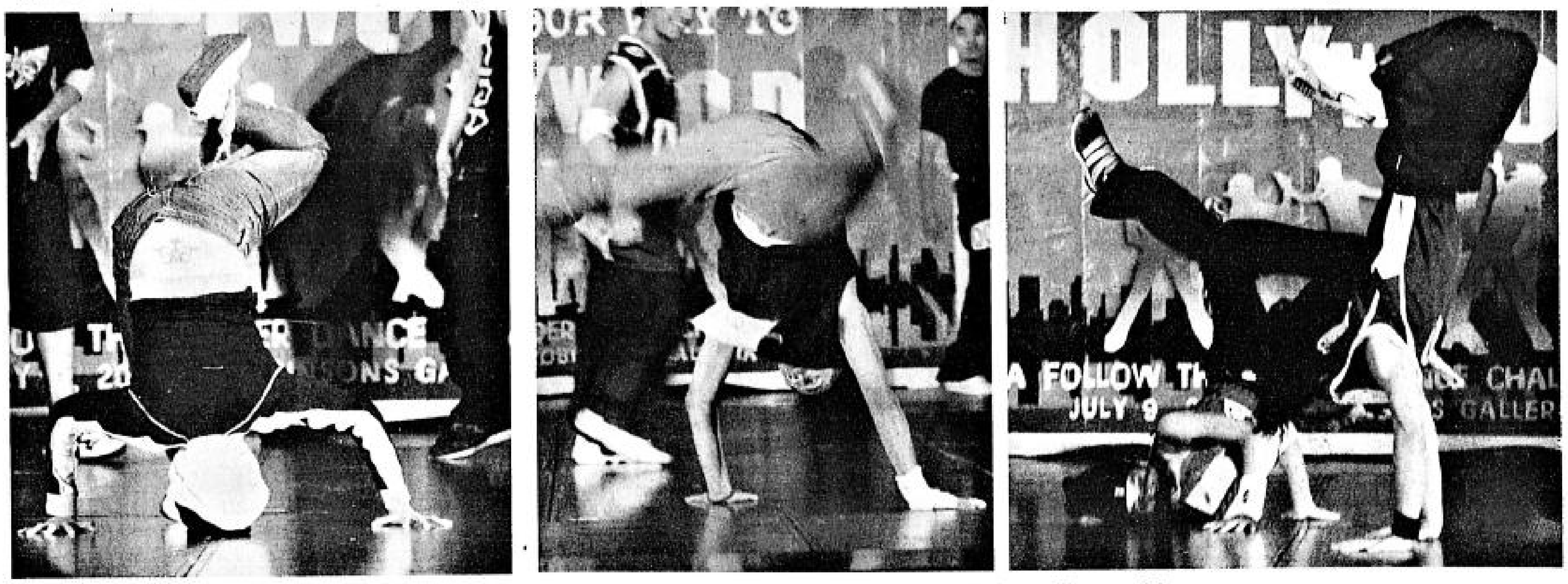
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso



TIMING, speed and perfect execution were essential to winning Gold's Gym's recent "Hip-Hop Your Way to Hollywood" competition.

Competitors fused the character and energy of the streets through electrifying body language to win a trip to the American film capital

Hip-hop, hooray for Hollywood

Text by Anne A. Jambora
Photos by Randy Hormillosa

A FUSION of dance disciplines and cultural influences from around the world, hip-hop is something no one country can truly claim as its own.

POP, lock, break. Street, funk, club. Old school or new school, hip-hop speaks the international language of music and lives for the artistry of spontaneous body movement. It is an unpretentious street culture, a raw emotional response to the pulsating beat, with tons of attitude—and bling-blings—to boot.

Caught in this rough-and-tough urban streak is a young generation of Filipinos who trooped to the recent "Hip-Hop Your Way to Hollywood" competition sponsored by Gold's Gym Body Shop and Gold's Gym with the Philippine International Competitive Aerobics Federation (Picaf). It was a follow-the-leader challenge, with contestants learning the moves only minutes before actual judging.

IT'S about clothes, music, attitude, posture and street style, and maintaining control of the speed, direction, momentum and body placement throughout the taxing routine.

"Hip-hop is a lifestyle, but it takes someone with an attitude to really pull it off," says Liela Fernandez, Gold's Gym fitness manager and Picaf secretary general.

And attitude reigned supreme, indeed, as over 20 competitors fused the character and energy of the streets—a cultural interpretation, if you wish—through physically demanding and electrifying body language. Of the 10 winners, five represented the country in the third World Hip-Hop Crew Competition in Los Angeles, California.

Dance culture

Three years ago, Fernandez says, the World Sport Aerobic included hip-hop in its annual competition, officially making the energetic dance a sportaerobic as well. (Sportaerobics, by the way, is the fifth discipline of gymnastics.) When a Filipino won in an individual category last year, she says the World Sport Aerobic requested Picaf to send contestants to the annual world hip-hop competition.

Although hip-hop is probably still far from becoming an Olympic sport, the performances are a showcase of strength, flexi-

HIP-HOP/ D3

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Take Charge Doc!

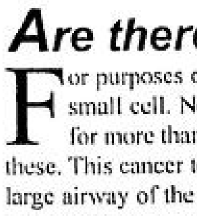
Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! is your weekly question and answer guide on general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, Take Charge Doc! parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health.

Are there different types of lung cancer?

For purposes of staging and treatment, lung cancers are broadly classified into small cell or non-small cell. Non-small cell cancers are further divided into four histologic types which account for more than 90% of lung cancer cases. **Squamous Cell Carcinoma** accounts for 25 to 35% of these. This cancer tends to be located in the more central portion of the lung, often, in the bronchus (a large airway of the lung from the wind pipe). Since this cancer is located near or in the air pathways, they can cause symptoms earlier in their growth. Coughing and production of phlegm that is bloody (hemoptysis) are common symptoms. **Adenocarcinoma** (25-35%) arises from the mucus secreting glands of the lungs and majority of these cancers develop in the outer part (periphery). Adenocarcinomas tend to spread to other parts of the body (metastasize)--the bone, the central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord), the adrenal glands, the liver, and the opposite lung. **Bronchioalvelar Cell Carcinoma** (2%) arises from any cell lining (epithelial) within or distal to terminal bronchioles. This type of carcinoma can be found throughout the respiratory tract. **Large Cell Carcinomas** (5-15%) are undifferentiated tumors or epithelial tumors with "primitive," unspecialized characteristics with large cells and an aggressive clinical course.

Small Cell Carcinoma is a tumor of bronchial origin which begins more centrally causing narrowing and obstruction of the bronchus. Small cell cancer is the most aggressive type of lung cancer and has the worst prognosis. These cancers tend to grow rapidly and metastasize to other parts of the body early.



Oncologist **Dr. Monica Geraldine P. Jurilla** answers this week's question on Lung Cancer. Doktora Monica, our accredited provider at Makati Medical Center, is also an Internist. She finished Medicine at the University of Santo Tomas in 1992 and in 1994 took residency training for her specialization in Internal Medicine at Makati Medical Center. She took her subspecialty residency for Medical Oncology at St. Luke's Medical Center in 1998. She is a Fellow of the Philippine College of Physicians and the Philippine Society of Medical Oncology and a Lifetime member to both the Makati Medical Society and the Philippine Medical Association. MEDICard members may visit her clinic for consultations at Room 226, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 10 AM to 12 noon.

BE HEARD AND BE READ. Write to DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA (c/o *TAKE CHARGE DOC!*) or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for inquiries on health matters.

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1. DASHING hoteliers: InterContinental Manila general manager Stefan Voogel and Holiday Inn Galleria general manager Bill Vincent; 2. Barry and Jaime Barker from the US embassy with travel hotshot Carlyn Manning, one of the founders of the Cheese Club of the Philippines; 3. Having their fill of wines and cheeses: Marilyn Altajeros, Genevieve Huang, Melinda Garcia and InterContinental Manila PR director Jenny Peña; 4. Weight-watching goes out the window for one night for these gals: Cynthia Reyes, Claudia Hernandez, Elena Arias, Rosanna Peña and Tessie Rodriguez; 5. Sultry, tanned Soraya Tierie with Stan Hilker

A cheese-y affair

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

IT was "say cheese" everywhere, and *moi* don't mean posing for photos, *palanggas*, but the hedonistic pleasures of gourmet dining, brought to us by the Cheese Club of the Phils. through its Cheese and Wine Degustation Party at Inter-Continental Manila's Grand Ballroom.

Twenty-four to-die-for cholesterol-rich cheeses, complemented by freshly baked breads from the hotel's Jeepney bakery, had cheese lovers swooning. Mega executive chef, talented and creative **Cyrille Soenen,** dished out a sumptuous spread of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and yummy calorific desserts.

The cheese platter consisted of Bleu d'Auvergne "La Memme," Brie de Meaux C-Cleris, the Roquefort Crouzat, Crotten Pas de Loup and St. Marcellin Lait Cru, all taken with choice wines such as Penfolds Koonunga Hill Shiraz Cabernet and Penfolds Rawsons Retreat Merlot. You name it, they had it, *palanggas*.

Beaming with pride over the successful happening was Inter-Continental Manila's well-liked general manager, the popular **Stefan Voogel** who welcomed club members. Needless to say, this gastronomic cheese and wine do had all the ingredients for success—good food and great wine, super company, and endless conversation. Well, what do you expect? With all that booze flowing, everyone was in a partying mood.

Nuvo is two

The upscale Nuvo Restaurant and Bar is definitely the hottest place to see and be seen in. More so when it celebrated its second year with a big bang! This talked about happening, *palanggas*, started promptly at 9 p.m. The hordes of invitees (which would make an events organizer drool with envy) were treated to a scrumptious array of hors d'oeuvres prepared by Nuvo's secret weapon, über executive chef, popular **Martin Bracker.** Naturellement, freebie booze from the bar flowed nonstop till Cinderella's "curfew" at midnight, with high-class drinks like Johnny Walker, Tanqueray, Bailey's, Chivas Regal, the ultra premium Platinum Vault Absolut Vodka and Remy Martin.

Our super godfather of the night life, **Louie Ysmael**, together with his radiant, beautiful wife **Cecille**, were there welcoming our town's hot, hip, classy namedroppables in the jam-packed interiors that had eye-catching long, white, silk drapes on the huge bay windows and gorgeous flowers (all done by talented Cecille) in every corner.

Nuvo's trademark tent was beautifully laid out with a gorgeous champagne tower, courtesy of chi-chi Moet & Chandon, natch! Cool jazz music, the smell of expensive scents on the invitees and great food added to the ambience of chic and style, which Nuvo has been known for since it opened.

It was a piece of cake spotting Nuvo's hotshot partners—magnum contractor **Philip Cruz**; international polo player and businessman **Iñigo Zobel**, and gorgeous wife **Maricris Cardenas**; and Punta Fuego's hottest name, **Pedro Roxas**, with his fashion-plate wife **Gina Tambunting.** On a rare night out were **Carlos** and **Mindy Perez Rubio.** Enjoying himself people-watching was business magnate **Andy Soriano.**

On again, after being off for months, were lovebirds mega DJ **Manolet Dario** and sultry beauty **Rachel Lobangco.** Also at Nuvo were one of our favorite couples, top golfer and business entrepreneur **Peng Perez de Tagle** and his wife, the vivacious and adorable **Vickie**;. **Jojo Silverio** and **Jenny Serrano**; and **Javi Berenguer**, with his lady love, head-turner **Lexi Schulze**, back after a breather in Spain.

Definitely the center of attraction at the al fresco section of Nuvo were gorgeous sisters two, **Rose Montenegro** and **Angela Montenegro-Arroyo** who enjoyed the action, *palanggas*. Seen, too, were **Dudo Vaca**, jetting in from Singapore for this happening; pretty, pretty, perky **KC Concepcion**; and suave **Anton Romulo.**

Having a ball away from the catwalk were Professional Models Association of the Philippines' beautiful models **Phoemela Baranda**, **Rachel Soriano** and **Pia Cabrera**; gorgeous twosome **Juan Elizalde** and **Bianca Araneta**; plus so many others like them too gorgeous to mention, *palanggas*.

As always, Nuvo lived up to its reputation for being the place for everything nice to happen, from fine food, good drinks to unbeatable ambience this side of the city. It was a wild night, but totally under control. Cheers for another swinging year of *la dolce vita*, dahlings!

Feasting down South

Never to be left behind, *palanggas*, the Queen of the South was the venue for another gourmet feast excellently prepared by top-of-the-line multifaceted chefs **Gene** and **Gino Gonzalez.**

At the popular La Gondola restaurant of the colossal, dazzling star Waterfront Hotel Cebu and Casino, the happening introduced the smooth, cool Ernest and Julio Gallo Sierra, Valley White, Zinfandel, Chardonnay, Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon to our Southern gentility.

Cocktails were followed by the smooth, buttery flavor of the E&J Gallo Sierra Valley Chardonnay that went perfectly with the Sogliola Arromatizza al Forno, which impressed the delicate palates of the gourmets and connoisseurs.

Concluding the evening's exquisite dinner was the equally bold and flavorful E&J Gallo Sierra Valley Cabernet Sauvignon and the Costolleto d'Agnello Farcite alla Scottadito and Onion Jam. Dessert was a delectable plate of Cassatta Siciliana.

Needless to say, *palanggas*, Cebu's chi-chi set couldn't say enough about the dinner, a veritable feast for the senses, thanks to E&J Gallo Sierra Valley's wine collection.

What to know more about this wine? Check with their exclusive distributor, The Andresons Group Inc., *palanggas*.

FATHER-AND-SON super chefs Gino and Gene Gonzalez with Zee Quarterly's Jing Ramos, The Freeman's Delia Jurado, and Zee's May Te toast Cebu's newest sensation, the E&J Gallo Sierra Valley wine collection.

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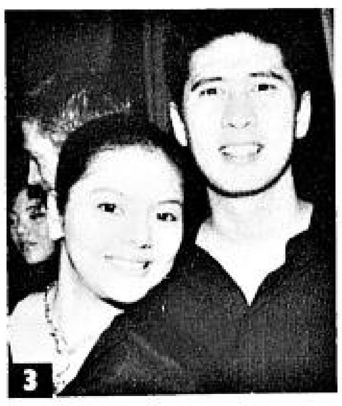
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1. SAYING "I do" next year, attractive Ana Garcia and Rustan's Bicho Bilbao; 2. Love is better the second time around for top DJ Manolet Dario and sultry beauty Rachel Lobangco; 3. Attractive Emma Policarpio and her Paolo Trillo; 4. Kara Tolentino with her favorite designer, a super-slim Rajo Laurel; 5. Business magnate Andres Soriano with pal Louie Ysmael; 6. Love is still on the air for Mindy and Carlos Perez Rubio; 7. Pixie beauty KC Concepcion with *moi* and vivacious Vickie Perez de Tagle; 8. Eye-catchers Becky Garcia and Jane Yu; 9. Woman of style: Gina Tambunting Roxas; 10. Happy couple, mega businessman Vince B. and his wife, working socialite Ana Bitong; 11. "Free again" Christine San Diego of Absinth with her pal, Vickie Castañeda; 12. The godfathers: Punta Fuego's Pedro Roxas and businessman Dudo Vaca; 13. I love the nightlife: Carminia Pavia, Asian Spirit's top hotshot Noel Oñate, Cecille Ysmael (the evening's hostess) and V's main man, Chito Melo

Q & A on abundance, agelessness, apples and more

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

IF you say emotions can affect your health, what is an effective way to stay in control?

You can take many self-help courses to exercise control over your emotions. Psychotherapists have repeatedly said all emotions are physical—your feelings cause a biochemical reaction in the body. If you dwell on problems and wallow in self-pity, your state of negativity can and will invite illness.

Gary Zukav's "The Heart of the Soul" or "The Power of Intention" by Dr. Wayne Dyer can be a life-changing book. Let me share a technique from Dyer's book.

"... If you find your life wanting, stop wanting. By being in a state of scarcity, you will not attract abundance. If you lack love, passion, success, wealth, health,' could it be because you see yourself as undeserving of it all? Do you always say 'poor me'? Be in a state of allowing, not disallowing. Change your belief system and master the art of allowing. This simply means giving yourself permission to be abundant in everything. Stop activating disallowing thoughts today, one thought at a time. Repeat these words... I feel successful, I intend to feel the abundance that is here, now... continually inundate your thoughts during your waking hours...

"Step 1—See the world as an abundant, providing, friendly place.

"Step 2—Affirm: 'I attract success and abundance in my life because that is who I am.'

"Step 3—Stay in an attitude of allowing."

Resistance is disharmony between your desire and your beliefs about your ability or unworthiness. Refuse any thought that makes you doubt your worthiness. Note that the energy that creates worlds and universes is within you. It works through attraction and energy.

As St. Paul said, "God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance." Tune in to God's frequency and you will know it beyond any and all doubt.

Are there any age-erasers you can recommend?

Short of prescribing concealer, here's a quick check list of do's and don't's.

Change your lifestyle. Embracing wellness isn't as easy as picking apples in a grocery. It takes will to change and commitment to a wellness lifestyle.

Diet—low fat, low sugar, low sodium, lots of water and sleep.

Take a multivitamin/multi-mineral supplement with extra doses of C, B complex and calcium, plus an antioxidant pill (to neutralize free radicals, highly active and damaging substances in the body produced by disease, radiation, poisons, etc.).

Exercise three times a week, minimum. A 30-minute brisk walk daily is even better.

Meditate daily (15-30 minutes), followed by prayer.

Stop bad habits (smoking, drinking, drugs, late nights).

Avoid the sun 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Use a sunblock with SPF 30 daily.

Eat more colorful food (greens and fruits).

Cut back on caffeine. Three cups daily is more than enough.

Believe in your power to create abundance in every thing. Be happy.

Note that one of the benchmarks of health is a strong and healthy heart. When Dr. Dean Ornish, president of the Preventive Medicine Research (Sausalito, California), made people adopt a change in lifestyle, 82 percent experienced after one year a significant reduction of fatty deposits that had clogged their hearts.

Why are fruits essential to good health? Do I have to eat an apple a day?

Not necessarily an apple. The rule is to eat five of any fruit/vegetable daily. Vary your choices each day. Some popular foods are papaya, melon, apple, pineapple, grapefruit, orange, banana, green leafy/cruciferous vegetables like lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus, squash and okra. Truth is, fruits and vegetables (the fresher the better) are loaded with antioxidants that help delay the aging process.

Here are easy ways to get your five-a-day ration:

Example A—portion of fruit/or juice at breakfast

dried fruits for snacks

salad for lunch

fruit juice at dinner; vegetables as side dish for main course

Example B—fruit juice for breakfast and chopped apples/bananas in your cereal

fresh fruit salad with yoghurt for snacks

carrot/broccoli soup for lunch

green salad for dinner

Can a poor diet cause depression?

Definitely. Depressed patients normally have lost omega-3 type fish fat in their blood cells. The level of omega-3 in the blood can determine the severity of depression. In short, the lower the omega-3 levels, the more severe the depression (from "Your Miracle Brain" by Jean Carper). Conversely, the more omega-3 fat depressed patients have in their normal diet, the less severe their depression.

It seems to be true worldwide—those who cut back on fish have the greatest incidence of heart disease and depression. It is true that there is a brain-heart connection. Hippocrates said it before: "Food that is good for the heart is likely to be good for the brain."

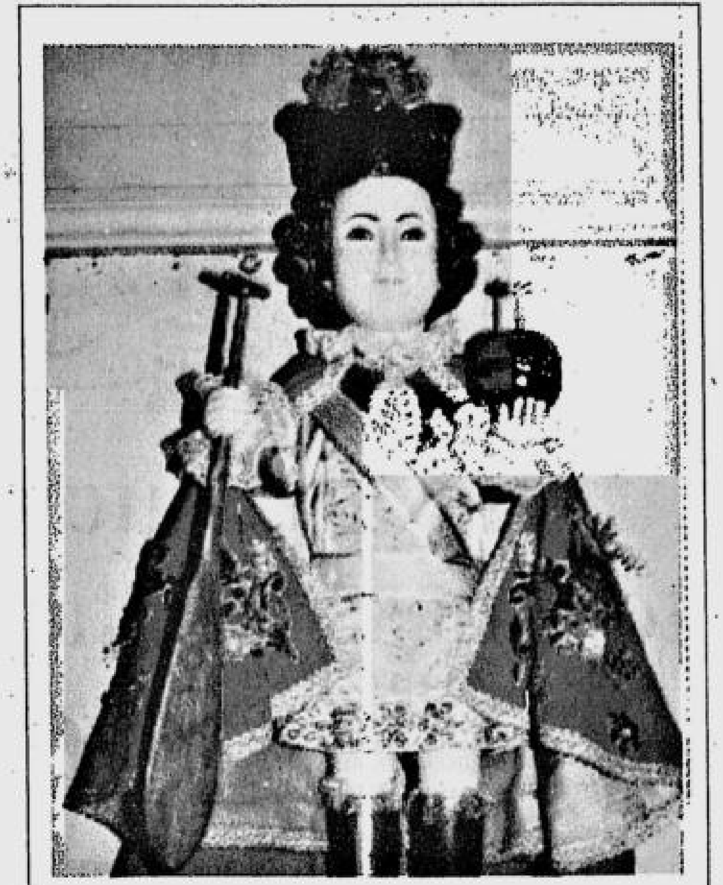
What is your best beauty regimen?

Hygiene ranks highest in the list. Bathe and cleanse your face and body at least twice a day. Scrub weekly. But don't forget to moisturize.

Love and light!

Watch "Life" by Cory Quirino, 11:30 p.m., Wednesdays, Studio 23.

Listen to "Ma-beauty Po Naman," 6-7 p.m., Sundays, Radyo Patrol, dzMM 630.



Father Boyno's miraculous Sto. Niño

Part II

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

ON MY last evening in Tagbilaran, Father Boyno insisted on seeing me because he wanted to show me a picture that he said he considered strange, without elaborating or even telling me what the picture was all about. He drove to Tagbilaran from his parish in Panglao just to give me that picture.

What was it? It was a picture of the 4 ft-high Sto. Niño de Panglao statue, which he had commissioned and was installed in his parish church. He told me to meditate on it and to tell him what I thought of it.

With all the last-minute activities I had to do, I wasn't able to concentrate on the picture. It was only after I returned to Manila that I had the chance to meditate on it. What I discovered was mind-boggling!

Merely looking at the picture of the Sto. Niño de Panglao already gave me strong vibrations or energy. When I went into the alpha level of my brainwaves, that is, in a most relaxed and receptive mode, with eyes half-closed, I saw something I did not expect to see.

Changing face

As I stared at it, the face began to change rapidly from that of a boy to a grownup woman, to a man, to what looked like a bearded king, then to the Blessed Virgin, then a man of different faces, then a child again. At some point the statue even winked at me.

So I hurriedly sent a text message to Father Boyno, "That statue is alive!"

In his reply he said: "I thought I was just imagining it when I saw him smile at me. I was not the only one who saw it." Father Boyno also said a Filipino immigrant to the United States told him he dreamed for one week of the Sto. Niño of Panglao, who told the US-based Pinoy he did not want to be forgotten.

Elves

Malou Lamoste said she had prayed the novena to the Sto. Niño de Panglao and swore, "It works." When I showed the picture to my secretaries, Emma de los Angeles and Antonette Sunga, and businessman and martial arts instructor Romy Macapagal, who is also an IMAP graduate, they all said their heads swelled. Romy saw the changing faces of the Sto. Niño, and Emma even saw an elf on each side of the statue.

Father Boyno was happy to have someone confirm what he experienced with the Sto. Niño. He was afraid to tell anybody for fear they might think he was out of his mind. But with growing testimonies from other people who had also experienced strange phenomena with the Sto. Niño, pretty soon people would believe such manifestations and would consider the statue to be really extraordinary and miraculous. They might not be able to explain what was happening.

As Shakespeare said: "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy."

Hip-hop, hooray for Hollywood

From page D1

bility and power. This is definitely not what many people have become familiar with in many group exercise classes. In competitions, Fernandez says contestants are not safe from injury.

A typical cardio (heart) funk or hip-hop class offered by numerous gym and fitness centers today, says Fernandez, is designed for students to work on their cardio endurance. "You have a block of 32 counts, breaking down the steps, to be able to choreograph a class and present it in a group exercise setting. The real hip-hop does not conform to that rule—this is the art form," Fernandez says.

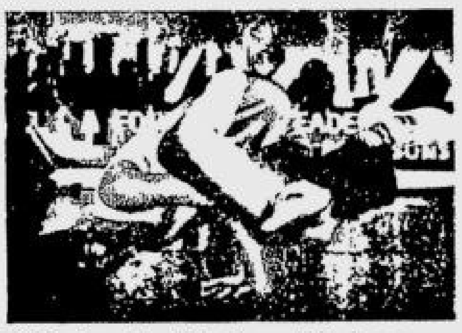
In fact, there are no straight-cut, laid out rules for hip-hop, which is why many young people gravitate toward it. Artistic freedom is paramount—uninhibited representation of attitude and energy. While that may be the biggest challenge, it is undoubtedly also the most fun part.

Urban moves

Competitors are free to mix old and new styles as long as street culture is vividly interpreted. The hip-hop phenomenon gave birth to words like funk or street bands, Fernandez says, because the dance is something people can do on the streets. In the world of hip-hop, showing off one's urban moves is as important as having the talent and skill to do the dance showcase well.

Presence, projection and confidence, measured through body movement, facial expression, eye contact, etc., are part of the judging criteria. It is important that participants communicate and connect with the audience, and be able to arouse their emotions.

FOLLOW THE
JULY 9, 200



KIDS, do not try this at home! Hip-hop as artistic expression demands much practice and loads of strength and flexibility.

"It's like having fun. They get to show their attitude and character, that's why hip-hop is so popular among the young," Fernandez says.

Winners in the "Hip-Hop Your Way to Hollywood" were Bryan Taguilid, Adelaida Enriquez, Mary Chris Villoso, Romulo Tolentino, Mia Cabalfin, Emmanuel Manalo, Jane Guevara, Rocky Bagalasca, Bimbo Casasola and Erwina Tolentino. Of these 10, five were selected as the country's first-ever representatives to the World Hip-Hop Crew Competition in Manhattan Beach, LA. Gold's Gym Active Wear by Gold's Gym Body Shop was the official outfit of the Philippine delegation.

The World Hip-Hop Crew Competition was produced and organized by Hip-Hop International, a division of the Los Angeles-based Sport Fitness International, creators and producers of World Sportaerobic Championship broadcast worldwide on ESPN. Twenty countries participated, including Japan, China, Brazil, Columbia, Canada, Italy, New Zealand, the Netherlands, France, the United States and the Philippines.

(The Philippine team, which barely had a month of practice before competing in LA this year, did not win a single prize. But Fernandez says next year's local competition will be bigger, and winners will have months to prepare and practice before going to the US.)

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From couch potato to fitness. . .

From page D4

picture of yourself in a bathing suit. But the message has to hit you hard in a personal way.

Preparation

At this stage, preparations are being made for the big day when you actually start exercising. You may have bought your athletic shoes and signed up at a gym.

Unfortunately, preparations don't guarantee that you will really exercise. Many people bought gym memberships but never used them. Others get brand-new exercise shoes and clothes but never wear them.

Prochaska suggests such strategies as telling others about your preparations to "pressure" you into making good on your promise. Writing a contract with a friend or with yourself has proven effective, especially if rewards and penalties are included.

Action

Prochaska considers someone to be at this stage if they have been exercising for at least six months. It is a well-known fact in the fitness industry that most people stop exercising within six months of starting, so this is still a vulnerable stage.

Many people become overconfident and allow themselves to skip workouts. Before they know it, they have stopped exercising and are back in the contemplation or preparation stage.

Stay in this stage by rewarding yourself for small victories like being able to walk for 40 minutes instead of 10. Deliberately manipulate your environment to avoid lapses. For example, when traveling, ask for a hotel with a gym so you can continue your routine. Keeping an exercise logbook or calendar is very effective in keeping you on track.

Maintenance

This stage is from six months onward, until exercise becomes a permanent and automatic part of your life. Prochaska says the emphasis should be in preventing lapses from becoming relapses. You have to make a conscious effort to make exercise a "habit." If you miss a session or two, immediately make up for it. The same strategies that work for the action stage, like keeping a logbook and manipulating your environment, work for this phase too.

Termination

This is the stage when exercise has become as automatic as brushing your teeth and taking a bath. At this stage, people don't have to make an effort; they simply exercise because it is part of who they are. Even if they have to stop exercising for one month because of a hectic travel schedule, for instance, they automatically go back to their routine on their return.

Very few people reach this stage. Prochaska says most remain in the maintenance stage for the rest of their lives.

Circular process

Prochaska says the psychological process of change is not linear. People tend to go up and down and around the stages several times. So if you are discouraged because you have been trying to get fit for the last couple of years, take heart. When you are psychologically ready to change, exercise can become a regular and constant part of your life.

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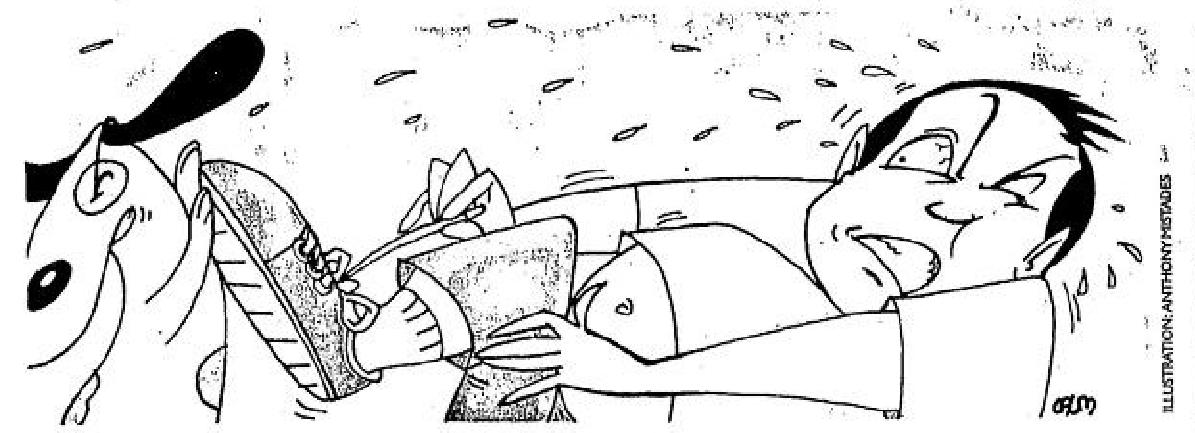


ILLUSTRATION: ANTHONY MISTADES

From couch potato to fitness fanatic in six steps

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

ASK those who quit smoking and they will tell you they tried to quit a number of times before they finally succeeded. The same is true for regular exercisers. Many people start and stop exercising several times before they catch the "exercise bug" for good.

Recently, a relative told me that after exercising irregularly for about a year, she is now on a mission to work out with a passion. Will she be permanently transformed from couch potato to fitness fanatic? It all depends on whether she is psychologically ready or not.

From his research with smokers, psychologist James Prochaska observed that people moved through a series of predictable stages before making a permanent lifestyle change. He called it the "The Stages-of-Change Model."

Other psychologists have applied Prochaska's theory to other behaviors like weight management, exercise adherence and substance abuse. You can apply it to any major change you want to make.

By understanding the stage you are in, you will be able to judge if you are psychologically ready to make a permanent commitment to fitness. By using Prochaska's tips in his book, "Changing for Good," you can "push" yourself to the next stage or prevent regression to the previous stage.

Understanding the process of change will also give you more patience with a loved one who is trying his/her best to change an unhealthy habit but can't quite succeed.

Precontemplation

People in this stage are not even thinking of exercise. If this is you, you may have resolved to get fit a few years ago but, right now, you don't see any good reason to work out.

Prochaska says a good way to push yourself into the next stage—thinking about exercise—is to learn about what fitness can do for you. This can happen by reading, watching television, listening to a discussion on the radio, or talking to friends about what exercise has done for them.

Contemplation

At this stage, people acknowledge they need to exercise and that it would be good for them. They want to work out but don't have a definite date or plan. A lot of talking but no action.

Prochaska says people can stay at this stage for years. What will eventually push a person into doing something? He says, aside from increasing your knowledge about fitness, you also need to become "emotionally aroused" about your health or your looks.

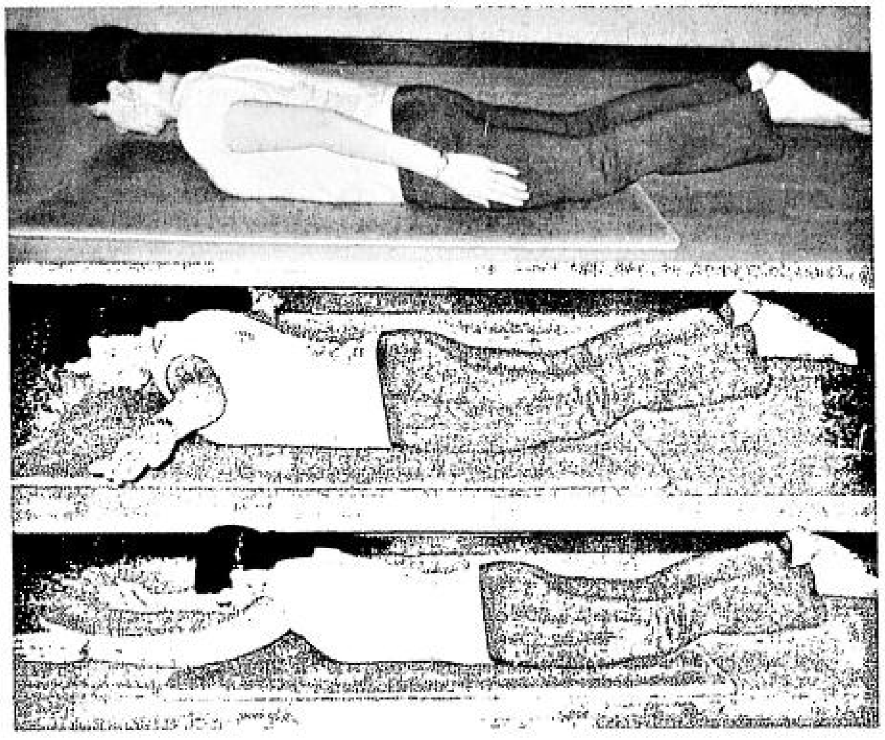
Some experts call this S.E.E., or a "significantly emotional experience." Others call it the "enough is enough" moment when you decide to act.

It can range from something tragic like the death of a young relative from stroke to something petty like seeing a

FROM COUCH/D3

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Three-way back extension



THIS exercise is inspired by the yoga pose, The Locust. It strengthens the buttocks, hamstrings, upper and lower back.

Equipment:

Exercise or yoga mat

Exercise technique:

1. Lie face down with your legs together and arms beside you, with palms facing the hips.
2. Lift your upper body and legs.
3. Hold each arm position—by your hips, shoulder level, reaching forward, shoulder level and by your hips—for five seconds.

Performance tips:

1. Maintain good neck alignment by lengthening your neck and looking down at the mat for the duration of the exercise.
2. Concentrate on lengthening and elongating your whole body from the top of your head to the tips of your toes.
3. Focus on your breathing by making sure your ribcage is expanding as you inhale.
4. If you have lower back problems, please consult your doctor first.

Repetitions:

Do one or two cycles.

let
the
day
begin
NESCAFÉ
Classic
one good day
coming up!